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exposed to Domestic Abuse**  
*An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.*

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**Hearing Teachers' experiences of working with children and  
young people who are exposed to Domestic Abuse:  
An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.**

Poppy Dalton

A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol  
in accordance with the requirements of the degree of  
Doctorate in Educational Psychology  
in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law.

September 2019

Word count: 48,743



## **Abstract**

This study explores the experiences of teachers who are working with children and young people they believe are exposed to Domestic Abuse (DA) at home. The rationale for undertaking this study was based on the increasing focus of legislation and policy on the phenomenon of Domestic Abuse in recent years. Legislatively, there is an increasing expectation of the responsibility of teachers in recognising, supporting and responding to the safeguarding need of children who they identify as exposed to DA in their home environments. The importance of schools in supporting children and young people's wellbeing has been evidenced.

The study begins by examining the relevant literature concerning DA as a phenomenon, the increased focus of the issue within legislation and the experiences of professionals such as teachers and Educational Psychologists in supporting children and young people exposed to DA. The literature review concluded that there is limited research available to evidence the experiences of teachers in the UK context. Where research exists, authors note the profession of Educational Psychology is in an ideal position to offer teachers support. The background literature provides a rationale for further research exploring the experiences of teachers working with children and young people who are exposed to DA at home. It was considered that the methodological approach of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) would offer the researcher the most insight into teachers' experiences of working with children and young people exposed to this phenomenon. A purposive sampling method was used to recruit 6 Teacher participants. Each teacher completed an individual semi-structured interview with the researcher to gain their perceptions on working in this area. Each interview was transcribed, and a thematic analysis was completed following IPA principles.

The findings of this research emphasise the impact that working with children and young people exposed to DA can have on teacher wellbeing. Teachers are explicit concerning strategies of support available to them to alleviate the emotional impact of this work. A model of the characteristics of effective support identified by teachers working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse is developed. The model highlights the implications for the teaching profession, setting's Senior Leadership Teams and the profession of Educational Psychology.



## Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to a number of people who have made the completion of this research possible and have offered endless support over the past three years.

Firstly, special thanks must be given to my supervisor Dr. John Franey for his endless support and patience over the last three years. Thanks too should go to the staff at the Norah Fry Research Centre for the excellent teaching I have received over the past three years, especially the D.Ed.Psych tutor team: Dr. Rob Green, Carmel Hand, Dr. Jak Lee and Dr Dan O'Hare.

I would also like to thank the team at the Educational Psychology Service where I have completed my final placement as a Trainee Educational Psychologist for all their support and guidance. This research would not have been possible without the teachers who agreed to commit their time to take part in this study, and who spoke so openly and honestly with me to allow me to gain insight into their experiences.

On a personal level, I would like to thank my parents, Martin and Beverley, sister Beth and my partner, Jack, for their unwavering support, understanding and faith in me, and for their never-ending confidence that I could achieve my dream.

Finally, I would like to thank my fellow Bristol TEPs: I could not have done this without the support, fun and friendship our group offer each other.





## Author's Declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's *Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes* and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, the work is the candidate's own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others, is indicated as such. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

SIGNED..... DATE:.....



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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Overview**

This study is an exploration of how teachers' experience working with children and young people (CYP) whom they believe are exposed to Domestic Abuse (DA) within the home environment. The study uses Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to gain a qualitative understanding of the lived experience of this group of professionals (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012). Firstly, a brief rationale of the study is presented, including the personal and professional experiences of the researcher which has prompted the topic choice. This is followed by a discussion of the terminology decisions the researcher made as part of the research and the evidence that informed these. A brief examination of the national context of Domestic Abuse and its prevalence within the UK will provide a context for the research. Following this, the context of the Local Authority where the study takes place is explored. The methodological orientation of the study will then be discussed followed by the research aims. The introductory chapter concludes by briefly outlining the chapters that follow, completing the body of the research.

### **1.2 Rationale: Why Domestic Abuse**

This research has been conducted to contribute towards completion of the Doctorate of Educational Psychology (D.Ed.Psych.) with the University of Bristol. The topic has been chosen due to the researcher's personal interest arising in the subject due to specific experiences. Primarily, the experience as a TEP within the Local Authority where the research was undertaken prompted reflection upon the researcher's own professional experience of working within the early years sector. During this time, they experienced real concern for children regarding home environments potentially exposing them to Domestic Abuse and the impact that this may be having upon their wellbeing and subsequent development. Whilst engaging with work as a TEP, the researcher came across similar stories from school staff where there was a level of concern regarding this circumstance but perhaps little quantitative evidence to engage wider agencies in supporting these children and young people. Secondly, reflecting upon the prevalence of the phenomenon within the researcher's working experience prompted reflections of personal nature: the researcher identifies as an individual who has previously experienced DA and subsequently became aware of how widely this issue exists societally.

If the following statistics are to be accepted, many professionals supporting children and young people regarding this issue may have experienced similar instances in their own personal circumstances; DA currently affects or will affect approximately one-third of women according to The World Health Organisation estimates in 2016 (WHO [World Health Organisation], 2016). The responsibilities concerning Safeguarding for all professionals working with children are clear and the recognition of the role of schools and staff is important. Teachers and schools are identified as being the “*universal service*” that can recognise patterns concerning this issue for our children and young people as they are in contact day to day more than any other service. Although a multi-agency approach is deemed essential: the responsibility on schools and their staff is undeniable (Ofsted et al., 2017, 107). The responsibility of Safeguarding and current legislation will be considered in further depth in the Literature Review of this research. The above considerations drew the researcher to determine that an important area to research would be the narratives of teachers who work with children and young people where it is believed they have been exposed to domestic abuse.

### **1.3 Terminology: The rationale used within the study.**

Within this study the term Domestic Abuse will be used to encompass the range of actions, including physical, emotional and financial, that can contribute to this occurrence. In previous years, the term Domestic Violence was most used and widely accepted in the UK to describe the collective actions of perpetrators of this crime (Abrahams, 2004; Holt et al., 2008; Wagstaff, 2010). However, in recent years it is notable that the term Domestic Abuse has begun to become increasingly prevalent. The term ‘Domestic Violence’ has been criticised as being deeply connected with the act of physical harm due to the word ‘violence’, and therefore may limit understanding of the complexities that this type of crime may encompass (Johnson, 2006). There has also been a suggestion that maintaining the ‘violence’ as a primary description may perpetuate the act of physical violence as being of primary concern, potentially maintaining stereotypical assumptions regarding the sex of perpetrators. Male victims were previously found to be less likely to report abuse and did not often recognise that violence against them from a female perpetrator was a criminal act (British Medical Association, 2007; Dutton and Nicholls, 2005).

Recently the term Domestic Abuse has been notably used in studies and legislation which seek to examine this phenomenon. In her recent article Ellis (2018) uses this term as describing the range of acts that can occur as part of this experience. Woman’s Aid and UK Government guidance such as *Domestic abuse: how to get help* (Gov.uk, 2018) are similarly using this term as opposed to Domestic



Violence. Whilst conducting this research, the researcher reflected that this term perhaps is more adept at communicating the scope of behaviours that can impact on victims, and subsequently the vast effects that could be experienced by individuals through exposure. Clarification of the exact definition for the term Domestic Abuse used within the research can be found in the following section of this introduction.

It is also important to note that this research has not intended to take a gendered approach to its findings. The researcher has not applied exclusion criteria to only include studies or experiences concerning patterns of abuse conducted by a male perpetrator to a female victim. At this point the use of the word 'Domestic' becomes key. Gallagher (2014) noted the importance of the neutrality of the word as it describes:

*Domestic relationships between both heterosexual and homosexual partners.....This term acknowledges the variety of patterns of abuse in relationships and makes apparent the existence of forms of minority violence* (Gallagher, 2014, p. 30)

However, it is important to acknowledge that literature gathered on this topic largely reflects the statistical prevalence of male to female abuse. It is likely that many of the experiences discussed by participants will draw upon this assumption, unless otherwise stated explicitly.

In regards to terminology it is equally important to note that the researcher intended that the term 'witness' used for children exposed to Domestic Abuse was used as little as possible throughout the present study. This decision was made due to the implication of the term 'witness' as being a largely passive experience. The British Psychological Society states that children exposed to domestic violence have suffered psychological abuse (Gallagher, 2014, referencing BPS, 2007). Psychological abuse is included under the umbrella term Domestic Abuse, as outlined in the definition in the following section of this introduction. Lourenco and Colleagues (2013) highlight the work of Sani (2006) who argued that "*children exposed to violence... can be considered forgotten victims*" (Sani, 2006, quoted in Lourenco et al., 2013, p.267). Therefore, the researcher felt that we cannot reduce children and young people's exposure to this phenomenon as being a 'passive' experience: they are victims of the abuse in their own right. The Adoption and Children Act in 2002 (section 120) established the definition of 'harm' to include "*impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another*" (Section 13, 9) acknowledging that children exposed to this behaviour are at risk of harm. However, it is important to note that as yet this is not recognised to be the case in current guidance and legislation regarding Domestic Abuse in the UK. Callaghan and colleagues (2018) have argued that when children and young people are perceived as 'affected' by the abuse rather than sharing the experience this serves to diminish the impact that the abuse can have on

them (Callaghan et al., 2018). It is possible that the simple reduction of recognition of the impact this abuse can have on individuals in turn can impact how adults are able to respond. Children should be recognised as experiencing domestic abuse as equally as the adults they live with “*they live and experience it directly, just as adults do*” (Callaghan et al. 2018 p. 1566; Lloyd; 2018). Often the terminology used to represent children’s experiences in this issue both connects them to the victim and distinguishes simultaneously with terms such as ‘children and victims’ or ‘victims and their children’ (Gov.uk., 2018). Significantly it has been observed that the widely accepted definition for the UK used below also fails to acknowledge the effects of DA on children (Izzidien, 2008).

#### **1.4.1 A brief introduction to the National Context of Domestic Abuse**

Domestic Abuse continues to be a persistent and endemic part of familial life, currently effecting approximately one-third of women according to The World Health Organisation estimates in 2016 (WHO, 2016). In the UK, approximately 1.3 million women are affected by Domestic Abuse and almost half of these reported children being present. Between 2017/2018 695,000 men reported experiencing it and reported instances of DA from all sexes increased by 23% from the previous year (Office for National Statistics, 2016). The problem is not limited to specific ethnicities, culture or class, demographics or sexual orientation, although current statistics indicate that abuse occurs most often against female victims (Abrahams, 2004; Dodd, 2009). Despite these figures there is currently no statutory definition of Domestic Abuse (Ellis, 2018). In 2015 a new offence of ‘controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate family relationship’ was included under the Serious Crime Act 2015 (section 76). A non-statutory cross government definition, including the above addition will therefore be used to establish a description for the use of the umbrella term Domestic Abuse within this research:

*Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional*

(Strickland & Allen, 2017: 4).

The high instances of DA means that it is likely that a high number of children are affected by the abuse. Ofsted’s recent paper *The Multi-agency Response to Children living with Domestic Abuse: Prevent, Protect and Repair* (2017) note that the official source for the Office of National Statistics Crime Survey is self-reported data and this only gathers the experiences of adults. Currently no official national source exists that collects information regarding the extent of how many children

are affected by this abuse. Existing research shows that as many as one in five children are exposed to these events (Radford, 2011) and this transfers statistically to equate to roughly 6 children in the average UK class size of 30 pupils. It is stated that Domestic Abuse is the '*most common factor in situations where children are at risk of serious harm*' in the UK (Ofsted et al., 2017). It is understood that Domestic Abuse statistics may not be able to be relied upon to represent the true extent of the problem as the concept of social collusion (the perpetuation of a societal problem by instilling secrecy and ingrained ideology surrounding it (Mullender & Humphreys, 1998)) remains an issue: it is likely that proportions of abuse remain unreported (Radford, 2008). A deeper consideration of the issue of Domestic Abuse will be undertaken within the Literature Review of this research.

#### **1.4.2 The Local Context**

The Local Authority (LA) where the research was undertaken is a large, rural authority. The average wage for the region falls significantly below the national average. There is significant geographic variation with roughly 35% of the population of the region living in larger urban towns. Dispersed settlements across varied landscapes including remote, rural and environmentally sensitive areas are high. The population is polarized with concentrations of visible wealth and significant poverty: both visible and hidden. 10% of the population are deemed to live in deprivation according to the National Index of Multiple Deprivation, and this cannot be isolated to exist only within 'deprived communities' (Gov.uk., 2015).

It has been reported by Ofsted that in 2016 there were around 222,000 episodes of Domestic Abuse cited as a factor in social care assessments. This was translated into roughly 28 new episodes a week in every local authority in England (Ofsted et al., 2017). If national statistics are accepted, the Local Authority where the research takes place would translate this into 18,800 victims of Domestic Abuse annually. However, only 8,233 accounts of DA were reported to police in the years 2014-15. It is estimated that Domestic Abuse counts for 37% of all violence in the region, and that DA equates to 13% of all crime in the LA (Safer DASV Needs Assessment, 2015). It is acknowledged that in some communities there can be a shared view perpetuated by members about what is deemed acceptable or 'normal' as part of family life (Gov.uk., 2017). Statistics indicate that as many as 30% of Domestic Abuse victims reported the problem to begin or escalate during pregnancy (Dodd, 2009). It is likely therefore that for many children exposed to domestic abuse in their home environment, this exposure could be considered part of 'normal' family life in their understanding of the world. For some children in the LA the geography of the region means that they belong to small, potentially isolated communities, where it can be reasoned that teachers are most likely to be the professionals who see them most frequently.

## 1.5 Methodological orientation

This research is qualitative in its approach. This type of research was felt to be most fitting for the study as it is primarily concerned with hearing individual experiences; focussing on understanding and representing participant's negotiation through their own worlds (Smith et al., 2012). This framework also allows the researcher's own epistemological position to be reflected: that of the interpretivist approach. The methodology of IPA was chosen which enabled the researcher to be committed to examine how professionals make sense of their own experiences in the subject of the research but equally enables them to acknowledge their position as a researcher in making sense of their sense (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2012). Upon reflection the researcher felt this aspect of the chosen methodology was particularly important due to the personal connection they felt with the focus of the study, as discussed in the Rationale section of this Introduction. The methodological orientation of this work will be discussed in further detail in the Methodology section of this research.

## 1.6 Research aims

The research aims to hear teachers' experiences of working with children who it is believed are exposed to Domestic Abuse. The researcher will investigate how this area of teachers' work may impact on them emotionally, and whether they identify ways in which support for this may be offered. Finally, the research will aim to identify whether teachers' feel that the profession of Educational Psychology are able to offer support and guidance in this area of their work. The researcher devised the following research questions to address the above aims:

- 1) *What are the experiences of Teachers who are working with children who it is believed are exposed to Domestic Abuse?*
- 2) *How do Teachers manage emotionally sensitive information in relation to these pupils?*
- 3) *Do Teachers perceive Educational Psychologists as being professionals that would be able to offer support in these matters?*
- 4) *Do Teachers identify how they could be supported when working with children exposed to domestic abuse?*

## **1.7 Structure of the Thesis**

### **1.7.1 Chapter Two: Literature Review**

This chapter begins by outlining the approach used to source research relevant to this topic including a literature review drawing on systematic principles. A section briefly considering the historical context of Domestic Abuse as a phenomenon follows, including the international context. This section concludes with a deeper consideration of the current national context.

The third section of this chapter focusses on the impact of DA on children and young people (CYP). The significance of this exposure to this phenomenon on children and young people through sharing home environments with adults who perpetrate, and are the intended experiencer is considered. A detailed breakdown of the possible outcomes CYP that exposure to DA could lead to is presented using three age group stages: Pre School, School Age and Young Adult. The section concludes with a summary concerning the psychological theories that are implicated in the possible outcomes for children and young people concerning exposure to DA.

The fourth section of this chapter focusses on the Policy and Legislation influencing professionals working within the Education sector, with emphasis on Safeguarding responsibilities and the Multi-agency response. A discussion on the socio-political context and subsequent challenges of this takes place. A section follows considering the ways EPs have contributed to this area; exposing the relative gap in the literature that this research seeks to address. Finally, the issue of teacher well-being is explored in the current context; considering the issues of secondary trauma, teacher burn-out and the potential for the profession to benefit from supervision.

The chapter concludes by outlining the research questions the following work intends to address based on the relative 'gap' in the literature concerning this topic.

### **1.7.2 Chapter Three: Methodology**

This chapter opens with a re-examination of the aims of the present study and the research framework the researcher chose to complete the work. A rationale for the methodological orientation of the work is then undertaken, including further detail of the researcher's epistemological stance. The chapter continues by explaining the methodology selected for the work and outlines the importance of this in more detail from the context of the researcher's personal experience. A description of the research design follows. The chapter then addresses the ethical

issues concerning the research, the method identified and the potential impact on how the data was analysed. The chapter concludes by examining the strengths and limitations of the methodology: including consideration of the impact that validity and reflexivity has on qualitative research.

### **1.7.3 Chapter Four: Findings**

Chapter 4 of this study presents the findings gathered from interviewing six teacher participants. The participant findings are presented as separate sections before the four overarching themes: *Emotional Impact, Strategies for Support, Relationships, and Current Context* are discussed.

### **1.7.4 Chapter Five: Discussion**

This chapter considers how the findings of the present study address the four research questions outlined above. Each research question is addressed individually, drawing on the existing literature discussed within Chapter Two of this work. A possible model of working for future practical application in supporting teachers working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse is outlined based on the research findings responding to Research Question 4. Implications for the professional practice of teachers, their Senior Leadership Teams and Educational Psychology are presented. The limitations of the research are discussed, as are possible future directions for research. The quality criteria for qualitative research (Yardley, 2000) are addressed, indicating how this research meets each of the outlined criteria. This includes the possibility that the research findings make a unique contribution to this area of study. Concluding comments complete the chapter.

## **1.8 Brief Summary**

Chapter one of the study has provided a rationale for the research completed. This included a definition of Domestic Violence as understood by current legislation and justification of the specific terminology used whilst completing the research. A brief national context was outlined and the local context for the research presented. The researcher then considers the methodological orientation and an outline of what the reader can expect in the following chapters. Chapter Two considers the literature that informed this research.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

As outlined in Chapter 1 this research intends to explore how teachers experience working with children and young people (CYP) whom they believe are exposed to Domestic Abuse (DA) within the home environment. In this chapter the researcher will review literature that relates to their topic of research. The chapter elaborates further on the national context of the phenomena that was briefly explored within Chapter 1 of this work. There will also be consideration of the historical context of domestic abuse as an area of concern. This review of research is an important step to consider the relevance of the current topic of research, the scholarly context the research sits within and to consider the contribution to knowledge that this study may manage to achieve. The chapter concludes by noting the possibility of gaps in research regarding the phenomenon to be addressed.

The Literature Review chapter is sectioned into several parts. A literature review drawing on systematic principles was completed, and an example of this search strategy can be found in the appendix of this document (please see Appendix. 2). It is important to note that due to the paucity of research specifically concerning the researcher's topic of study following on from the search strategy, the researcher then adopted a snowballing technique of seeking relevant research from references of relevant studies as a complimentary approach to the review drawing on systematic principles. Government web sites were also viewed to search for appropriate documentation that would contribute to a wider understanding of the legislation concerning this topic. A more detailed description of the methodological approach to this search can be found in the subsequent section.

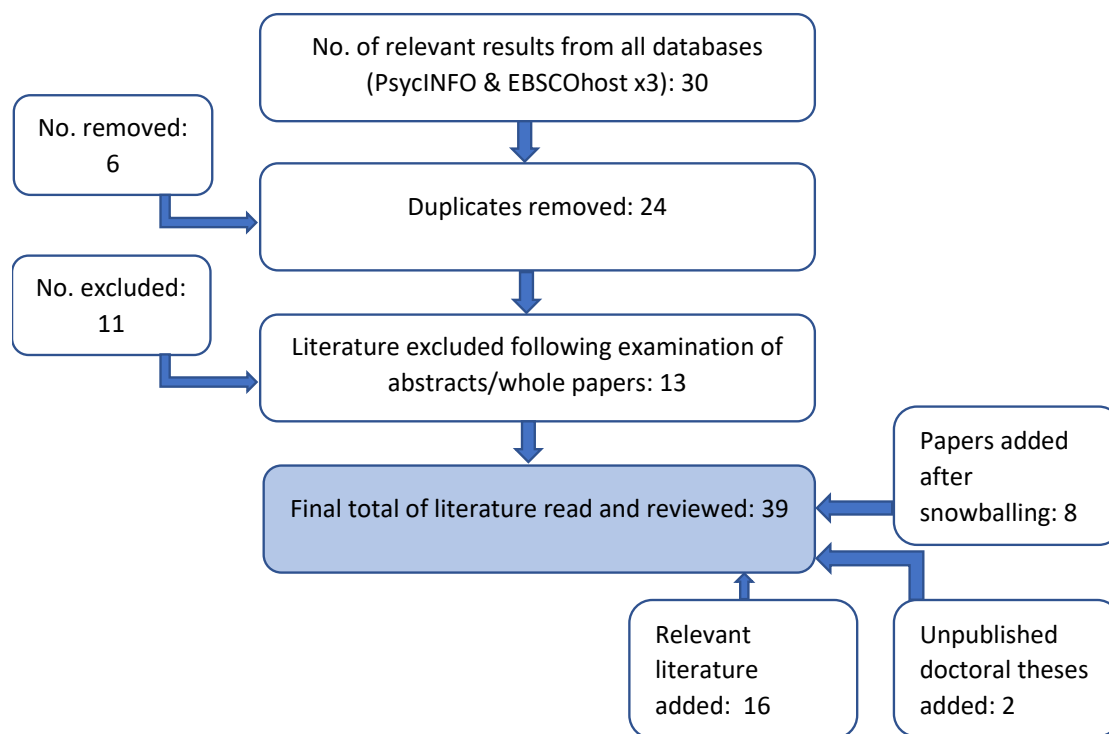
Firstly, the literature review considers the concept of domestic abuse as a phenomenon, beginning with consideration of the historical context and an examination of the current national context. This will be important to 'set the scene' for the socio-political context which the research is undertaken. The consideration of domestic abuse specifically concerning children as 'witnesses' will be examined, followed by the examination of legislation and research which shows the responsibilities of adults working with children and young people to recognise, manage and support individuals where exposure to the phenomenon is believed to be occurring. Crucially, this section outlines the expectations of schools to be in the 'best position' to manage much of this responsibility in the current socio-political context. The researcher will then examine the research which has previously been completed that focusses on the experiences of teachers who work with children and young people who are exposed to domestic abuse. A critical examination of this work is undertaken to

establish where the present study could contribute to a growing body of evidence concerning this area of research. The final section of this chapter concludes by examining research which considers the concept of teacher well-being, reflecting on the concepts of emotional load, secondary or 'vicarious' trauma and 'burn-out'. The concluding remarks focus on reviewing the above and noting the direction the current research takes, based on the establishment of potential 'gaps' in the literature.

## **2.2 Approach to the Literature Search.**

To complete a review of the available appropriate literature for the research a review drawing on systematic principles was used. The use of the University of Bristol website enabled four databases to be searched: PsychINFO, Educational Resource Information Centre (ERIC), British Education Index and Child Development and Adolescent Studies. Governmental policies, appropriate legislation and relevant body's reports were found using search engines and reviewing appropriate websites and subsequently included. As noted above, additional relevant literature was identified by the adoption of a 'snowballing' technique from the references of selected papers. As well as this, the British Library's Electronic Thesis Online Service (EThOS) was searched for any unpublished doctoral theses that could be of relevance to the topic. The procedures used to conduct the literature search can be found within the Appendices (please see Appendix 2). A summary of this process is outlined in the flow chart below:





Literature was excluded from the search depending on a range of criteria, including:

- Literature about children and young people's exposure to Domestic Abuse but not relevant in terms of research aims: for example focussing on wider community projects effecting change.
- Literature where Domestic Abuse and school systems were considered but individual exposure to the phenomenon was not part of the criteria for participant inclusion: ie the impact of preventative education programmes.
- Literature focussing on children and young people's exposure to Domestic Abuse which focussed on a different criterion than that of the current study: for example, studies seeking to determine a gendered pattern of difficulty for individual exposure to the phenomenon.
- Literature reporting outcomes for other populations not of direct focus for the present research study ie: parental interventions, shelter staff, and social workers (sole focus).
- Literature which was completed in education systems where parallels to the UK system were not able to be consistently robust (USA).

The literature was reviewed drawing on systematic principles. Excel spreadsheets were used to organise the papers and the researcher's responses to these. An example of this can be found in the Appendices (please see Appendix 3). The spreadsheets included key information such as

methodology of the studies, nationality and whether the paper could be included as part of the present studies Literature Review. Each paper was critically examined using the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP, 2018) and these criteria informed the researcher's critique and evaluation of the studies considered. An example of this critique can be found in the Appendices (please see Appendix 4).

## **2.3 Domestic Abuse as a phenomenon: Historical, International and National Context.**

It is important for the purpose of this research to first acknowledge that the experiences of children exposed to domestic abuse in their home environment is undoubtedly and inextricably linked to that of the experiences of the adults living with them. With this in mind, the researcher will first consider the history of the phenomenon of domestic abuse and as discussed briefly in the Introduction of this work, the majority of early work concerning this considers mothers primarily as the victims (Wagstaff, 2010). It was noted in the Introduction that this research does not take a gendered approach, recognising that all genders have reported to have been subjected to Domestic Abuse and the phenomenon is not isolated to heterosexual relationships; reports of violence within same-sex relationships have been noted (Humphreys and Mullender, 2002). Similarly, it was noted that much of the work available to the researcher focusses on the consideration of females being predominantly in the position of victim. Humphreys and Mullender (2002) note that “*historically, statistically and globally the predominant pattern is one of men’s violence towards women*” (Dobash & Dobash, 1992; Mullender, 1996; Humphreys and Mullender, 2002, p. 6). Statistics over the last decades indicate that abuse reported occurs most often against female victims (Abrahams, 2004; Dodd, 2009). It is important that the gender tendency is noted as above due to the historical context to be considered, particularly in regard to the consideration of the maintenance of social collusion which Humphreys and Mullender (2002) cite as being a significant contribution to the perpetual maintenance of the phenomenon, and its subsequent impact on our children and young people (Humphreys and Mullender, 2002). For the context of this study where the focus is on understanding the experiences of adults working with children who are exposed to domestic abuse at home, it is necessary to recognise in the above context that it is statistically likely that these experiences will follow the male perpetrator to female victim pattern.

### **2.3.1 Historical and International Context**

Domestic abuse as a phenomenon is not modern. The prevalence of its occurrence is steeped in historical context and social collusion which should be recognised. It is widely accepted that throughout history there has been gender inequality and a societal ethos which has upheld patriarchy; husbands dominated wives, men were afforded heightened status, influence control and power (Dobash and Dobash, 1992), and marital rape was not criminalized in the UK until 1992 (Gov.uk, 1992). It has been argued that the feminist movement during the 1960’s and 70’s initially raised the phenomenon of domestic abuse and violence against women into public focus as an issue to be combatted (Wagstaff, 2010). It can be presented that domestic abuse, and the understanding

of the social collusion concerning the phenomenon, must be recognised as existing within a wider societal and historical context of the persistent degradation of women (Hester, 2013). This is not an area which the current research can explore in depth but a nod to historical predecessors raising awareness of the issue is needed. The focus of this research may not have been possible without the early awakenings of discontent which impacted upon subsequent societal and legislative changes, both internationally and nationally, to be explored within this chapter.

Significantly, the United Nations Declaration on the *Elimination of Domestic Violence Against Women* (United Nations, 1993) has resulted in at least 45 nations issuing legislation that specifically recognises violence against women as a criminal issue. Violence against women is now recognised internationally as a human rights violation. The problem is not limited to specific ethnicities, culture or class, religious groups, age, demographics or sexual orientation and is accepted as an international phenomenon. Domestic abuse continues to be a persistent and endemic part of familial life, currently effecting approximately one-third of women according to The World Health Organisation estimates in 2016 (WHO [World Health Organisation], 2016).

### **2.3.2 The National Context**

In the UK, approximately 1.3 million women are affected by Domestic Abuse and almost half of these reported children being present. One in six violent incidents were reported as being domestic violence in the British Crime Survey 2007/2008, and up to one in 5 women reported experiencing violent acts by an ex or current partner with as many as one in ten men reporting similar circumstances (Kershaw et al., 2008). However, by 2016, as noted above, the World Health Organisation noted that as many as one in three women are likely to have experienced domestic abuse (WHO, 2016). Between 2017/2018 695,000 men in the UK reported experiencing it and reported instances of DA from all sexes increased by 23% from the previous year (Office for National Statistics, 2016). It has been noted that Domestic Abuse statistics may not be able to be relied upon to represent the true extent of the problem as the concept of social collusion remains an issue: it is likely that proportions of abuse remain unreported (Radford, 2008). This increase of reports between 2007/8 to 2017/18 could suggest that the strangle hold of social collusion and secrecy connected with the phenomenon is slipping, and that a wider understanding of acceptable behaviour in relationships is becoming established within UK culture. However, it has continued to be acknowledged in more recent publications that social collusion may continue to be perpetuated in some communities as there can be a persistently shared view from members about what is deemed acceptable or 'normal' as part of family life (Gov.uk., 2017). Alternatively, the statistical

increase noted above could suggest that the recognition of the signs of concern connected with safeguarding and DA might be increasingly understood for families and increased instances reported or supported to be disclosed. Further consideration of the safeguarding responsibility and legislation concerning DA will continue in subsequent sections of this chapter. Undoubtedly what is clear from the various statistics available is that DA remains a significant societal issue within the UK.

Domestic abuse is a phenomenon that has received increasing focus over the past few decades. This has been argued to be, in part, due to the recognition that, within the UK context, DA as an issue puts significant economic strain on public services, including social care and health (Gallagher, 2014; McKee & Mason, 2015). Strategies such as the *Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy* (HM Government, 2009) positioned the phenomenon beyond a criminal justice focus and presented the necessity that a wider, systemic approach to addressing the issue was needed (Gallagher, 2014). The *Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls* (HM Government, 2013) continued to perpetuate the necessity for UK policy to combat the issue on a wider scale, stating that:

*“we need all parts of the system, criminal justice, education, health, housing and benefits to work together to identify, protect and support victims and bring perpetrators to justice”*

(HM Government 2013, p.3).

Significantly, this statement demonstrates the importance of a multi-agency approach in moving towards improved outcomes and reduced instances of DA in the future. Crucially, the mention of Education moves responsibility into the hands of teachers and school staff as playing a vital role in the success of this strategy.

In the above the researcher has presented a brief history of the phenomenon of DA as an occurrence and highlighted the connection between a wider societal issue concerning the previous decades perpetuation of patriarchy. It is noted that the issue is an international one, with as many as one in three women likely to experience this within their lifetime. The changing national context was presented. The current research will now move on to focus discussions on the phenomenon of DA specifically regarding children and young people exposed to the issue via the relationships with the adults who care for them.

## 2.4 Domestic Abuse and Children

This section examines in further detail the likelihood of children being exposed to the phenomenon in their home environment and the subsequent possible impact and outcomes that this home life experience has been found to have on these children and young people (CYP). It concludes with a presentation of three psychological theories that can be used as frameworks of understanding for the significance of the impact of exposure to domestic abuse on children and young people.

### 2.4.1. Children and Young people's exposure to Domestic Abuse

It is understood that many types of abuse are referred to by the term Domestic Abuse. A discussion of the researcher's choice to focus on this terminology over others such as 'Domestic Violence' can be found in the Introduction chapter of this research. Ellis (Ellis, 2018) noted that at the time of her publication, there was no statutory definition of the term and offered Strickland and Allen's (2017) cross governmental definition in lieu:

*"Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional"*

(Strickland & Allen, 2017, p. 4).

Subsequently, the above definition has been adopted as fitting by the Home Office (Home Office, 2018). It highlights that domestic abuse is not solely concerned with the physical, but that all aspects of injury including emotional and psychological are to be considered as equally as harmful. As noted in the section above, children and young people (although the above definition does not apply to those under 16) can experience the damaging effects that the phenomenon can cause by being deeply connected to the adults within their home subjected to DA. In the first section of this chapter it was noted that much of the research concerning DA takes a gendered approach to their findings and that whilst this study does not apply exclusion criteria to the research, this needs to be considered. However, mothers are important to consider at this point in the discussion. Statistically it was found that half of adults who have experienced harm from an ex or current partner share their home with children under 16 (Home Office, 2009). Significantly, a study by Mezey (1997) suggested that in 30% of domestic abuse cases the violence began whilst the woman was pregnant, raising the possibility that the pregnancy acted as a catalyst. Alarming it was found that when domestic abuse already existed within the relationship, the level of abuse was felt to increase during

pregnancy (Mezey, 1997). Later studies statistics echo that as many as 30% of Domestic Abuse victims reported the problem to begin or escalate during pregnancy (Dodd, 2009). It is likely therefore that for many children exposed to domestic abuse in their home environment, this exposure could be considered part of 'normal' family life in their understanding of the world.

The high instances of DA means that it is likely that a high number of children are affected by the abuse. Ofsted's recent paper *The Multi-agency Response to Children living with Domestic Abuse: Prevent, Protect and Repair* (Ofsted et al., 2017) notes that the official source for the Office of National Statistics ONS Crime Survey is self-reported data and this only gathers the experiences of adults. Therefore, currently no official national source exists that collects information regarding the extent of how many children are affected by this abuse. Existing research shows that as many as one in five children are exposed to these events (Radford, 2011) and this transfers statistically to equate to roughly 6 children in an average UK class size of 30 pupils. It is stated that Domestic Abuse is the '*most common factor in situations where children are at risk of serious harm*' in the UK (Ofsted et al., 2017). 50% of those children who are categorised to be 'in need' were reported to have experienced DA (DfE, 2016). Crucially, adults experiencing DA who have children and young people sharing the environment may report that they have successfully protected them from being exposed to harm. Studies have shown consistently that this is not likely to be the case. Children have voiced having knowledge of when incidents of DA have happened in their home when their parents reported to believe them to have no understanding of this happening (Mullender, 2006).

It is important we recognise that children and young people are likely to be impacted as equally as the person who directly experiences the abuse when they share the same home environment, alongside the acknowledgement that children are likely to be caught in the cross-fire of physical aggression due to the potential attempts to protect those who are the primary target of violence. Due to the nature of this research it is important that the researcher now consider how this exposure is likely to present itself in children and young people. The following section outlines the potential impact that exposure to this violence can have on our children and young people.

#### **2.4.2 The Impact on Children exposed to Domestic Abuse**

This section outlines what might be observed to be the impact of exposure to domestic abuse in the home environment on children and young persons' development. This is presented in three sections to represent changes that a young person's age can have on how exposure may affect them. It is important to note here that this grouping of ages is by necessity approximate as individual

differences and contexts of those exposed must always be acknowledged. It will be important to understand the impact exposure to domestic abuse can have on children and young people as the researcher approaches a later section of this Literature Review focussing on Legislation and Policy which aims to protect and safeguard them. The duration a child or young person is exposed to domestic abuse has greater impact upon their levels of stress and anxiety than the severity of the violence itself: the longer a child's exposure the more significant their response to this experience is likely to be (Sterne and Poole, 2010). We understand that the harmful effects to those who experience and are exposed to domestic abuse are interrelated and can present themselves in the forms of physical, emotional and behavioural and cognitive and social responses (Lloyd, 2018).

#### **2.4.2.1 Pre-school Age**

The researcher will first consider the impact that exposure to domestic abuse in the home environment can have upon pre-school children (infancy - four years old). As shown above, Dodd (2009) noted that as many as 30% of victims of domestic abuse report that the violence began or escalated during pregnancy (Dodd, 2009). This is significant when considering the impact on very young children who experience domestic abuse within their home environment, as for many infants, this exposure will be part of their 'normal' home life. Research has shown that psycho-social development in young children when exposed to domestic abuse at home is increasingly problematic (Harper et. al., 2018). This is particularly important when considering the impact that difficulties in this area for individuals may have upon their developing social skills and connecting strategies as they age. It has been found that as younger children, particularly pre-schoolers, have limited abilities for coping emotionally (as a responsive and connected adult usually would manage and contain emotional distress for them as they develop and learn independence in this skill) they are more likely to exhibit psychological and behavioural disengagement as a result of exposure to violence at home (Baker and Cunningham, 2009; Lloyd, 2018). It is presented that as infants who experience significant and distressing noises at home, a coping mechanism as a response to these experiences is likely to be an ability to 'tune-out' environmental noises which subsequently makes connection and interaction with these young children harder as they develop and begin attending a social setting such as nursery or pre-school (Baker and Cunningham, 2009). Separation anxiety can be shown by pre-schoolers, particularly in concerning a reluctance to be parted from their non-abusive carer. Baker and Cunningham (2009) have stressed that signs of exposure to domestic abuse within this age group are not necessarily easy to establish or detect, especially from the perspective of staff who work with these children in settings. Behaviours such as being withdrawn, engagement with repetitive play, impaired understanding, 'tantrums', reluctance to become independent, anxiety and regression are all possible outcomes of exposure to domestic abuse and violence at



home, but are equally all possible to be regular behaviours as children grow and develop (Baker and Cunningham, 2009; Lloyd, 2018). To compound this issue, for the children who have been born into an abusive household, behavioural 'changes' may be less likely to be detected. For these children the risk of normalisation becomes significant, as staff may accept these individual differences as part of natural diversity rather than them being noted as potentially having a more causal link.

Above the researcher has outlined some of the difficulties faced by young children who may experience exposure to domestic abuse at home and highlighted the challenges of setting staff who have a responsibility to recognise behaviours which may indicate concern within the home environment for this age range. The latter aspect of this will be particularly relevant in a later section of this chapter, concerning the responsibility of adults who work with children and young people in safeguarding and child protection. The study will now go on to consider the impact of this phenomenon on children and young people of school age.

#### **2.4.2.2 School Age**

Whilst school age children can experience a similar range of difficulties to pre-school aged children, it is important to acknowledge each age and stage as separate in the impact on individuals; some, but not all behaviours exhibited are similar. Significantly, separation anxiety is not limited to pre-school age and it has been found that school age children experiencing this effect of exposure to domestic violence can develop increasingly sophisticated strategies to manage this area of difficulty. As children develop they may adapt their responses to this anxiety by moving away from the initial 'clingy' behaviour of separation towards increasingly adaptive strategies such as feigning illness, and perhaps may become increasingly disruptive within school with the underlying agenda of the possibility of being sent home as a result (Lloyd, 2018). There is the possibility that as children become increasingly aware of their home experience as being threatening, gaining a wider understanding of the world through the increased exposure to peers through statutory education, the need to 'protect' their non-abusive parent increases. Separation anxiety may not just be isolated to the anxiety of the removal of that emotionally connected adult but may be a result of wider concern for parental welfare. Regardless of the cause of this aspect of concern, the result can lead to disruption in schooling through non, or 'patchy' attendance which can in turn impact on educational attainment, maintenance of friendships and positive peer relationships, developing a sense of community as an active school member, and self-esteem as a learner.

The physical impact of exposure to domestic abuse on school age children is not limited to potential injury, whether deliberate or accidental. It has been noted that for a school age child exposure to prolonged stressful experiences can result in physical manifestations such as asthma and bronchitis,

both accepted to be linked to stress (Calder and Regan, 2008). Children who have or are experiencing trauma at home can often display hypervigilance as well as hyperarousal at school (Sterne and Pool, 2010). Hypervigilance can manifest in poor concentration and attention skills as children become constantly watchful of danger. Hyperarousal can result in unpredictable behavioural patterns including aggression and heightened levels of the anger response in individuals. Much of the above experiences for school age children could be considered as the underlying root cause of the many emotional effects that can be experienced by children exposed to violence at home. Effects such as insecurity, withdrawal and low self-esteem can be noted to be impacted upon by poor attainment, perhaps due to difficulties in attention and concentration as well as social challenges such as difficulty connecting with others or maintaining positive relationships as a result of unpredictable behaviours which have been noted in school age children who have been exposed to domestic abuse at home (Calder and Regan, 2008). Crucially; domestic abuse can impact on children and young people's cognitive skills and educational attainment (Lloyd, 2018), perhaps as an amalgamation of the above concerns. The latter consideration of educational attainment being impacted upon by exposure to domestic violence is a point which will become important during a later discussion concerning the responsibility and multi-agency nature of safeguarding in response to referrals of suspected domestic abuse cases.

#### **2.4.2.3 Young Adult**

This section outlines the potential outcomes and effects that exposure to domestic abuse at home can have on our young people and adults. In 2018 the Children's Commissioner (2018) noted an extensive list of indicators as a result of domestic violence at home for young people including: depression, self-harm, self-blame, eating disorders, and substance abuse. Externalised behaviours are likely to include criminal behaviour, disaffection with education and poor social networks and risk-taking behaviour (Children's Commissioner, 2018). Studies have noted that within this age group there appears to be a more gendered approach to observing the impact of domestic violence on young people (Lloyd, 2018). It is proposed that at secondary age girls may display increasingly withdrawn behaviours connected with the experience of domestic abuse at home such as increased levels of anxiety and depression and becoming increasingly withdrawn. For boys, although still likely to experience depression and anxiety, it is felt that this is manifested through increasingly external behaviours such as engaging in anti-social behaviour or violence towards others (Baldry, 2007; Lloyd, 2018). Interestingly, the difference between the occurrence of internalised behaviours versus externalised behaviours as a result of exposure to domestic abuse at home was commented upon in a study which considered homelessness as a subsequent result of leaving an abusive household. Digby and Fu (2017) spoke to teachers regarding the impact of homelessness after domestic violence

and their sample noted that withdrawn behaviours were more likely to be exhibited in a younger child whereas a secondary school aged young person might be considered more likely to exhibit anger and aggression due to frustration over their circumstances (Digby and Fu, 2017). These findings might suggest that in secondary provision, externalised behaviours may be considered more note-worthy by school staff than that of internalised behaviours as perhaps externalised responses to trauma by individuals are likely to result in notable disruption to an increasingly formalised learning environment. This study will be revisited in further detail in a subsequent section of this chapter which focusses on research conducted with professionals in relation to the phenomenon of domestic abuse.

For this age group, research has indicated that for professionals to best support them in managing the impact of exposure to domestic abuse at home, young people need to feel listened to as well as involved in finding strategies that support them (Mullender et. al., 2002). Significantly, young people have shared that school is often the “*best place*” to explore and process these issues safely (Humphreys & Mullender, 2002, p.23).

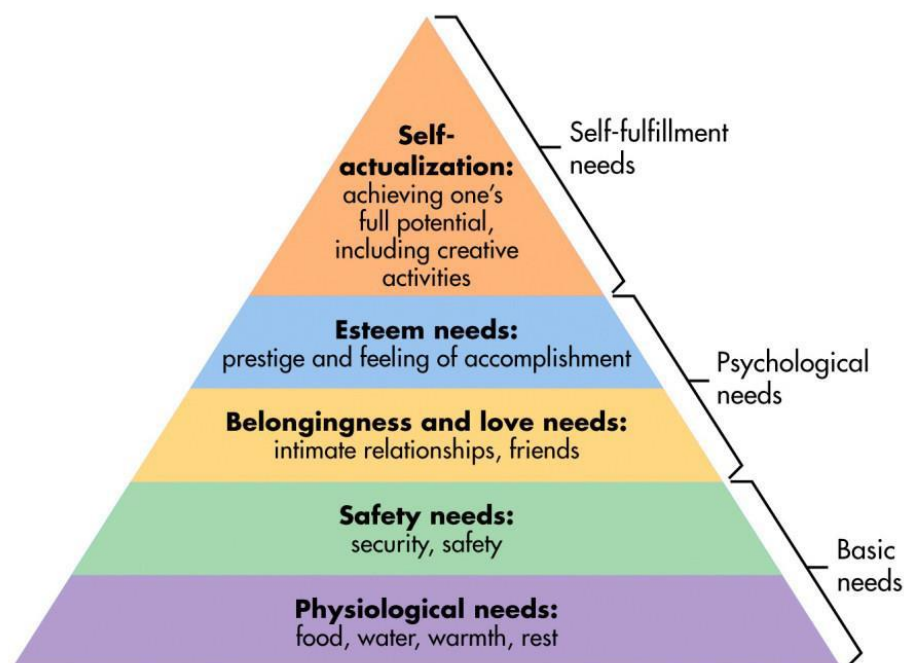
### **2.4.3 Psychological Theories as Frameworks of Understanding.**

The above subsections have outlined the impact that exposure to domestic abuse can have on children and young people. It is important for the purposes of this research to recognise that the impact of this phenomenon on young people’s outcomes can be understood by the application of some key psychological theories as frameworks for understanding. Theories from Maslow (1943), Bronfenbrenner (1979), and Attachment theory (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Bowlby, 1969) will now be presented.

#### **Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (1943)**

Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs (1943) remains a key theory for understanding the implications and importance of external and environmental factors influencing the development and subsequent outcomes for children and young people. This five-tier breakdown of human needs motivates behaviour. Starting with the basic needs for physiology such as food and shelter, moving upwards to include concepts of safety, love, self-esteem and self-actualisation (which would include education). Top tiers cannot be fully achieved if there are gaps in the lower levels (Maslow, 1943; 1954). This tiered system towards self-actualization can be used as a framework for understanding some of the difficulties that children and young people exposed to domestic abuse may experience, as discussed above. If we consider the diagram below, when a young person is exposed to domestic abuse within

their home environment, it is possible to hypothesise that they are likely to experience inconsistencies in their concept of feeling safe within their environment. Similarly, their sense of connection to family members may be at risk, both in response to the direct victim of the abuse (should they be unable to respond emotionally as they might otherwise due to responses to trauma) and potentially to the perpetrator, where a young person may feel a sense of connection to them as a loved parent or family member, but equally feel conflicted in this connection due to the sense of uncertainty this relationship may create due to unpredictable patterns of behaviour. This similarly implicates Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) which will be considered in further depth presently. In some cases, a young person's physiological well-being may be impacted upon by the need to leave their home environment quickly, or simply if an injured parent is unable to provide food consistently if they are avoiding leaving the household environment whilst they heal.

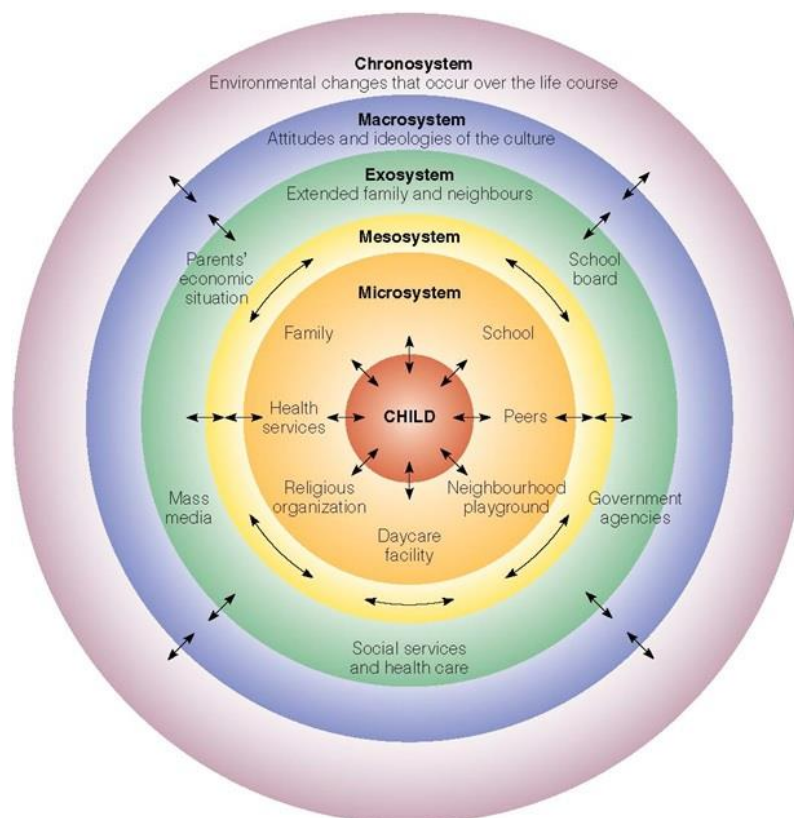


*Maslow's hierarchy of needs (McLeod, 2017)*

### **Bronfenbrenner (1979)**

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) can be similarly used to understand the psychological underpinnings of children and young people's possible difficulties resulting from exposure to domestic abuse. Particularly important to the current research is the consideration of the significance of 'Microsystem' to child development as part of Bronfenbrenner's work. The Ecological systems theory determines that the child sits at the centre of wider circular

systems which they interact with as part of their experiences of the world and these systems influence their subsequent development (see below). The first circle of these systems is referred to as the Microsystem which typically includes relationships with key people in their lives, particularly family members and caregivers. How this system interacts with children influence how they develop. Crucially, if these relationships are inconsistent then it is hypothesised the child adapts their responses and interactions with wider systems in response to their understanding of the world based on these interactions (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). As mentioned above, if a primary caregiver's response to children and young people is impacted upon by their experience of domestic abuse and subsequent trauma-based responses, it is likely that an individual exposed to domestic abuse in their home environment has a microsystem that is significantly impacted upon by this exposure. This in turn could affect their interactions with others both within their immediate Microsystem and with the wider systems such as the Mesosystem (interactions between home and school for example) which is a vital consideration for the purposes of the current research.



*Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979)*

### **Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1969; Ainsworth et al., 1978)**

The final psychological theory to be considered as a useful framework for understanding the impact of exposure to domestic abuse on children and young people is Bowlby's Attachment Theory (Bowlby, 1998). This theory emphasises the importance of children and young people's key relationships as they develop impacting upon outcomes. It stresses the importance of attachment figures, which for the majority of individuals would, first and foremost, be their parents or caregivers within their home environment. Four attachment styles have been outlined as being observable in children and young people when interacting with their carers and are formed as the consequence of patterns of interaction with these carers. For Secure attachments to form, a caregiver is typically considered to be consistent in their responses and sensitive to the needs of their child. In the case of the remaining three attachment styles there is likely to be inconsistencies in the emotional responses of parents or caregivers when responding to children and young people. Ambivalent, Avoidant and Disorganized, or generally insecure attachments in young people, are believed to be the result of emotionally distant caregiving, where a parent or carer cannot engage consistently in responding to their children as their needs dictate. Abusive, neglectful, emotionally distant behaviours or unpredictable patterns of behaviours such as swinging between extreme emotions can all contribute towards a young person developing an attachment style which may not be conducive for the development of typical patterns of behaviour as they grow (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1969). As noted above the significance of the impact on children and young people's exposure to domestic abuse in the home environment is able to be understood by applying this theory of understanding to the care that may be available to them from both the victim of the abuse and the perpetrator. The emotional availability of a parent is crucial to the healthy development of children and young people and if there are inconsistencies in this, despite best intentions, as a result of experiencing trauma or living in an unstable and unsafe environments, this is likely to have an impact.

#### **2.4.4 Concluding Comments**

The above has outlined the impact exposure to domestic abuse can have on children and young people and was explored in three separate age ranges to represent changes that can occur as a young person develops. Three key psychological theories were presented as possible frameworks for understanding this impact. As noted above, this is not a definitive account of expected behaviour to be recognised as a response to exposure to domestic violence as it is presented with the acceptance that individual differences will always take precedent over 'expected' or recognised outcomes of the

exposure. It is important to note at this point that whilst we understand that many children exposed to domestic abuse at home are impacted by said exposure, not all children who are exposed suffer from adverse effects (Martinez-Torteya, Bogat, Von Eye & Levendosky, 2009). Humphreys and Mullender (2002) stress that when considering future planning for children, consideration of the wider support networks available to children and young people must take place, particularly wider familial connections and school staff (Humphreys & Mullender, 2002), which further justifies the consideration of theories such as attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) as frameworks for understanding the impact of the phenomenon on children and young people.

This section has served to undertake a recognition of the wide range of signs and symptoms that may be associated with exposure to the phenomenon of domestic abuse, which are necessary for professionals such as teachers to have knowledge of for the purposes of safeguarding, which is the focus for the next section of the review.

## 2.5 Policy and Legislation responding to Domestic Abuse and Children

In this section the researcher will present relevant policy and legislation which indicates adult responsibility of working with children and young people, particularly when there is the consideration of domestic abuse in the home environment. Safeguarding legislation is noted. The multiagency agenda is considered as a requisite element to safeguarding in the UK. Finally, the researcher presents a discussion considering the current socio-political climate and the challenges that this environment may pose for professionals, particularly school staff and teachers as a result of this policy and legislation.

### 2.5.1 Policy and Legislation

In the UK the focus on domestic abuse within policy has been steadily increasing since the early 2000s. The Children Act 2004 and Every Child Matters documentation (Department for Education and Skills, 2004) are evidence of governmental strategies designed to improve and support successful outcomes for children. The agenda underpinned and established the responsibility of all professionals working with children to work towards achieving the five outcomes: being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and economic well-being (DfES, 2004). The documentation also highlights the significance of information sharing amongst professionals and promotes integrated working (DfES, 2004); an agenda which will be discussed in further detail later in this section of the present research.

The focus of the UK government on the importance of addressing the issue of domestic violence continued with the first *Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy* (HM Government, 2009) moving the issue on from 'simply' a criminal matter to a wider strategic and 'integrated' response issue. In 2013 the UK government's *Call to End Violence Against Women and Girls* (HM Government, 2013) further continued the attention on the phenomenon stressing;

*'we need all parts of the system, criminal justice, education, health, housing and benefits to work together to identify, protect and support victims and bring perpetrators to justice'*

(HM Government, 2013, p.3).

Additionally, the publication *Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: a Green Paper* (Department of Health, and Department for Education [DoH and DfE], 2017) emphasised an increasing expectation upon schools to support our children and young people via a 'whole-child' approach rather than solely focussing on education and attainment alone. This paper



highlights the importance of positive mental health for children and young people as contributing towards positive future outcomes.

The above emphasises an increasing focus on the inclusion of domestic abuse as an issue in documentation as well as a wider focus on mental health. It also introduces the importance of the concept of integrated services and a multiagency response which the UK's current safeguarding expectations uphold.

### **2.5.2 Safeguarding Legislation**

Domestic abuse is without question to be considered as part of the landscape of child protection (Lloyd, 2018). The child protection documentation *Working Together to Safeguard Children* (HM Government, 2013) emphasises the need for action regarding the safeguarding responsibilities of professionals but highlights the importance of the child remaining at the heart of the work: children's needs and views should be heard and upheld (Holt, 2014). The title of this documentation makes UK professional responsibility clear: a multi-agency approach is necessary for effective child-protection and safeguarding.

The recent documentation *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE, 2016) has stressed the safeguarding responsibility of all staff and professionals working with children and young people to be responsible for reporting any concerns they may have for an individual to social care. This impacts upon teaching staff as there is no longer the expectation that a singular Designated Safeguarding Lead within schools is considered responsible for safeguarding referrals.

### **2.5.3 The Multiagency Approach**

The multi-agency agenda continues to guide policy in the current context for professionals and tragically this has continued to be found to be an issue within examples of Serious Case Reviews (SCR) repeatedly citing issues with failures of not responding early enough to initial signs of abuse, ineffective recording systems and slow information sharing amongst relevant professionals (DfE, 2016). Significantly, for the purposes of this research, the government has recently pledged to strengthen Education's position as part of the expected multi-agency response to safeguarding and emphasised their expectation that schools will have a greater role in statutory guidance to come (HM Government, 2018; Lloyd, 2018).

The necessity for successful multi-agency working and information sharing to safeguard and protect our children and young people is noted time and time again through successive governmental policy and legislation. Ultimately legislation upholds that:

*“children are best protected when professionals are clear about what is required of them individually and how they need to work together”* (Holt, 2014, p. 56).

#### **2.5.4 Current Socio-Political Paradox: a discussion**

The present research sits within a specific socio-political context which is contributed to by the adaptation and expectations of successive central governments to policy and legislation, both affecting safeguarding and child protection strategies as well as wider expectations on the education system in general as outlined previously. It feels important at this point to consider this context, both to understand what is currently expected of professionals within the working education environment and to outline the context to which the current research participants will be responding.

A recent report completed by Ofsted; *The multi-agency response to children living with domestic abuse* (Ofsted et al., 2017) stresses that schools are central to the successful identification and support of children and young people who are exposed to domestic abuse within the home environment. Crucially this document outlines the need for wider agencies such as social care and the police to share information more proactively with schools and their staff, due to the level of importance that they play in the role of working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse at home. The document equally upholds the importance of schools being the best place to proactively educate students about healthy sex education and relationships, noting that preventative education is likely to have the biggest impact on reducing future instances (Ofsted et al., 2017). This equally echoes studies which have found that young people feel that schools and their staff are often the best places to offer support as noted previously (Alexander, Macdonald & Paton, 2005; Dustin & Shepherd, 2013; Fox, Hale & Gadd, 2014; Humphreys & Mullender, 2002). Significantly for the purposes of the current research, within Ofsted’s report (2017) teachers have raised issues in offering the support to children and young people regarding exposure to domestic abuse that they would like, including noting increasingly limited resources to offer support. It was also noted by the report that school staff felt that at times wider agencies in receipt of referrals tended to perceive physical harm as more in need of a response than that of psychological harm (Lloyd, 2018; Ofsted et al., 2017). If the definition of domestic abuse presented within this work is to

be accepted and upheld by all professionals responsible for safeguarding our children and young people, the distinction between psychological and physical harm should not be applied as part of wider agency thresholds for referrals.

The recognition by successive governments and policy makers that schools and their staff are crucial in supporting, educating and safeguarding young people in matters of protection is noted within a recent paper by Lloyd (2018). In her paper, Lloyd presents that the impact that domestic violence can have on children and young people and argues that schools have great potential in offering their support concerning this phenomenon. Much of this information considers the context which the researcher has outlined within this Literature Review. One of the most pertinent aspects of Lloyd's work discusses the increasing expectations on schools and staff within an increasingly paradoxical environment (Lloyd, 2018). Movements such as the above noted Ofsted report and an increasing focus on the importance of schools supporting mental health through the introduction of designated senior leads in mental health, which will be required in every school (Department of Health, and Department for Education [DoH and DfE], 2017) emphasise an increasing expectation upon schools to support our children and young people via a 'whole-child' approach rather than solely focussing on education and attainment alone. However, Lloyd (2018) notes that these increases in expectations continue to exist alongside an educational system that is '*attainment-driven*' (Lloyd, 2018, p. 9). It is presented that the "*marketisation of education*", which forces schools to compete via league tables and exam results, sits at odds with the increasing focus on student mental health and well-being as a responsibility of the education system (Lloyd, 2018, p. 9; Baginsky et al., 2015). The two expectations become contradictory to one another when we accept the impact that domestic abuse can have on children and young people, as outlined above, and recognise that for some students, exposure to such may affect their ability to interact with education as others might. At this point the previously mentioned study by Digby and Fu (2017) (where externalised behaviours of students exposed to domestic abuse might be considered more 'noteworthy' in secondary provision) might add evidence to the apparent conflict within the education system between the expectations of supporting students wellbeing and the need to maintain high levels of educational attainment in order to 'compete'. Baginsky et al (2015) summarises this succinctly:

*"There may be an inherent conflict between...pressure on institutions to demonstrate high levels of academic attainment and discipline by pupils in a competitive educational 'market' and...the role of schools in recognising and meeting the pastoral needs of children..."*

(Baginsky et al., 2015, p.358)

To add an additional level of complexity to the current expectations of the education system in terms of safeguarding and child protection legislation, the issue of resourcing noted by teachers within Ofsted's 2017 report is necessary to consider, an area which is also noted by Lloyd (2018) as being an important issue impacting on the potential of schools to support children and young people affected by domestic abuse (Lloyd, 2018; Ofsted et al., 2017). This discussion could also include further notes on the introduction of academisation and free-schools, introduced and implemented by successive government policy, where independence from local-authority governance is likely to have impacted upon information sharing due to changes in relationships with local authority professionals (Baginsky et al., 2015). This is not an area which the researcher can afford to explore in detail within the current research, but is note-worthy, nonetheless. The focus of the issue of resourcing lies within the funding cuts to the UK's education system since 2010 (Belfield, et al., 2018). The budgetary restrictions have not only affected staff pay, and subsequently numbers of support staff and teachers overall impacting on mounting workload pressures, it is noted that wider training and CPD have been impacted upon by resourcing restrictions (Lloyd, 2018; National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers [NASUWT], 2018). To further this, wider funding cuts have resulted in some areas losing valuable external support services for victims of domestic abuse, perhaps placing further pressure upon the expectations on within-school support (Lloyd & Ramon, 2017; Ofsted et al. 2017). This is significant considering findings that suggest that teachers acting in a supportive role beyond their "*professional scope*" and "*without being suitably qualified*" are at risk of putting students in a more dangerous situation, both emotionally and circumstantially, than before a disclosure (Lloyd, 2018, p.6; Howarth et al., 2016; Swanston et al. 2014).

### **2.5.5 Concluding Comments**

This section has considered the increasing responsibility of the education system through successive legislation and policy in the UK aimed at improving outcomes for children and young people. Relevant safeguarding legislation was noted. A requisite to apply a multiagency response to safeguard and protect our children and young people in the UK was presented. Finally, a discussion of the current socio-political climate in which this research is conducted took place. The issue of potentially contradictory expectations upon the education system and the professionals who work within it was explored as part of this discussion, including budgetary restrictions, pressures of attainment expectations and a focus on the need for schools to offer wider support to their pupils.

This section has served to highlight the current context of the working environment for the participants of the present research. The following section considers research which has been conducted with teachers and wider professionals, specifically the profession of educational psychology, concerning the phenomenon of domestic abuse in order to consider the impact that the responsibility of legislation and policy expectations may have on professionals managing this.

## **2.6 Professional involvement with Domestic Abuse and Children**

In this section the researcher will explore research which considers professional involvement with domestic abuse and children and young people. Research that has been conducted with teachers and wider professionals concerning working with young people where domestic abuse at home is an issue is discussed. Studies which seek the direct experiences of teachers working with young people exposed to domestic abuse are discussed, critiqued and upheld.

### **2.6.1 Challenges with the Multi-agency approach.**

Byrne and Taylor (2007) conducted qualitative research with Education Welfare Officers (EWOs), child protection social workers and secondary teachers who were interviewed to gain perspectives on children at risk from domestic violence and the impact this may have on educational attainment (Byrne & Taylor, 2007). The significance of this study to be considered for the current research is due to the contrasting positions that emerge between the three types of professionals, particularly concerning teacher perspectives and social workers (Dalton, 2017[unpublished]). Whilst not the primary focus of the Byrne and Taylor's (2007) research, the issues presented within the discussions are pertinent to the current study. The findings suggest that there is clarity in legislative practice concerning an effective multi-agency approach. However, on practical application of the procedures, participants appeared to feel this was not as clear cut. Education professionals acknowledged and understood their legal responsibility regarding safeguarding referrals. How this transferred in a practical sense for social worker participants was not as clear (Byrne & Taylor, 2007).

Significantly, within this study teacher participants reported the highest number of cases where they had worked with individuals where domestic violence in the home environment was confirmed in comparison to the other participant groups. All teachers and EWOs in this study were clear in stating that where domestic violence was felt to be an issue for CYP, a referral to social services would be undertaken. What happens after this point appeared to be unclear: highlighted by social worker participant perspectives. The Social workers in Byrne and Taylor's (2007) research had little consensus regarding how these referrals are dealt with. Comments regarding the concept of "*status*" levels of referrals (Byrne & Taylor, 2007, p.192) and "*workload pressures*" (Byrne & Taylor, 2007, p.197) indicated that social workers felt able to respond to only the most serious of cases. The findings of the study offer significant reflection regarding the present research topic. Teachers report managing higher numbers of cases concerning domestic abuse. When a safeguarding referral has been deemed necessary by school staff (believing they have evidenced criteria for outside agency

involvement), demand on these wider services may lead to rejection of referrals (Byrne & Taylor, 2007). This could result in teachers feeling unable to access wider support that they believe necessary. These issues raise implications for schools and EPs and therefore should be considered within the scope of the present research. Teachers experience a higher level of contact with domestic violence cases than the other professionals interviewed within Byrne and Taylor's (2007) study, and potentially there may be limited support available from referral services when the legally expected contact is made. Significantly, accepted referrals to social workers may be subject to issues of confidentiality which prevents further information sharing with schools, leaving referees uncertain of outcomes for their students (Byrne & Taylor, 2007; Dalton, 2017[unpublished]). Findings such as these may have led to the recent governmental commitment to ensure that Education professionals and their responsibilities towards the multi-agency response of safeguarding are strengthened in upcoming statutory guidance, as mentioned in a previous section of this chapter.

### **2.6.2 Educational Psychologists' involvement with Domestic Abuse**

Gallagher (2014) completed research which sought to understand *Educational Psychologists' conceptualisation of domestic violence* (Gallagher, 2014). The research gained the positions of five participants using qualitative semi-structured interviews to seek how, or if EPs' considered the phenomenon of domestic abuse as pertinent to their work with children, young people and families. Findings suggested that the profession perceived a number of facilitators and barriers to managing this work. Facilitators identified by EPs included receiving training on the phenomenon, being equipped to offer support to children and their families through the application of therapeutic interventions, and the feeling well supported by the practice of supervision to combat any issues they may face as a consequence of involvement in this work. Barriers to their involvement included feeling that there were other professionals to which the work was more 'relevant' (such as social care), perceiving the involvement in DV cases as time consuming and 'long-term' and the issue of secrecy involved with this work (Gallagher, 2014). Gallagher (2014) argued that EPs can have a wider role in supporting teaching staff in association with this phenomenon by offering training in how to respond emotionally to vulnerable children, addressing issues at systemic levels through helping schools promote healthy relationships, raise awareness of domestic violence, and deliver training, as well as offering wider support for staff through consultation and supervision (Gallagher, 2014).

The implications for EP involvement identified above are strengthened and upheld by the findings of two studies completed by Ellis (2012; 2018). This work will be addressed in further detail as part of

the examination of research that has sought to understand the experiences of teachers supporting children exposed to domestic abuse outlined below.

### **2.6.3 Research focussing on Teacher experiences of working with Domestic Abuse**

As mentioned previously, there appears to be very little research which has focussed on the experiences of teachers working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse. In this section the researcher will consider the findings of three studies which have endeavoured to explore this area.

Münger and Markström (2018) conducted qualitative research to understand how school staff recognise and identify children in the school system that are exposed to domestic abuse (Münger & Markström, 2018). The study was conducted in Sweden and as such sits within the specific context of the Swedish education system and the wider governing policies of the country. Nevertheless, it is important to consider this work as informative to the current study as parallels may be drawn. The author's present that part of the rationale for their work is based in the context of the education system; educational institutions in the Swedish context are *"expected to identify and support children in various difficulties, including domestic violence"* as the educational expectations of that system are linked with child wellbeing as a priority (Münger & Markström, 2018, p. 299). Furthering the rationale for the work, it is noted that research has found that school professionals may lack the general awareness about child abuse, but crucially this is mostly the case for children's Exposure to Domestic Abuse (EDA), the term used to describe children's exposure to domestic violence throughout the work. (Eriksson, Bruno & Näsman 2013; Bruno, 2011; Münger & Markström, 2018). This is problematic within the Swedish context. EDA is recognised to be child abuse, to be equally as concerning for professionals as sexual or physical abuse (Kaufman Kantor & Little, 2003; MacMillan & Wathen, 2014; Münger, 2015; SOU 2015:55). Alongside this, concerns appear to be underreported by educators in comparison to other professionals such as social workers (King and Scott, 2014) and that school staff may lean towards distancing themselves from 'family problems' (Bruno, 2011).

The study applied two qualitative methods to collect data from its participants. Focus groups were conducted with preschool teachers and teachers, as were individual interviews. Interestingly, school social workers, school nurses and special-needs educators were also included as part of the focus group approach. The author's note that they were interested in representing the difference in experiences and perceptions of EDV *"in general"* rather than noting the *"difference in different categories of professionals"* (Münger & Markström, 2018, p.302). However, in including wider



professionals as part of the focus group, the authors acknowledge that they contribute as equals to the *“Recognition and identification of children”* in schools exposed to domestic abuse in the Swedish context (Münger & Markström, 2018, p. 299). It seems a potential weakness of the study that these professionals were not then spoken to as individuals to gather their views as equally as preschool teachers and teachers were.

The findings of Münger & Markström’s (2018) study appeared to indicate that participants did not necessarily consider EDV as an issue affecting children and did not consistently recognise exposure to violence as child abuse as the Swedish context upholds. Participants shared that there was often a ‘feeling’ something was wrong, and likened identifying what this was to an investigation or ‘puzzle’, where they took on multiple roles such as that of police officer or social worker to work out what might be happening (Münger & Markström, 2018, p. 306). Behaviour changes, relationships with the child and longevity of teacher experience all seemed to be evidenced by participants as important to working out this ‘puzzle’. Ultimately though, the study appeared to find that EDV was not considered high enough on the hierarchy of need of these young people to be considered by teaching staff as warranting ‘solving’ at school (Münger & Markström, 2018, p. 312). Despite this, the study found teachers and the other professionals spoken to are very aware of their responsibility for children’s wellbeing and longevity of experience made them more able to interpret signs of abuse connected with EDV (Münger & Markström, 2018). The same author’s subsequently published research which aimed to understand the experiences of school health staff and teachers and how these impact upon decisions to report concerns for children exposed to domestic violence in the Swedish context (Markström & Münger, 2018). This study will be addressed in further detail in a subsequent section of this literature review.

The second and third study to be considered regarding teachers experiences of working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse have been conducted by Ellis (2012; 2018) and are part of the UK context. The first of these studies, completed in 2012, sought to explore primary teachers experiences and perceptions of supporting children exposed to domestic abuse in a single Local Authority (Ellis, 2012). This study is most likened to the current research intentions.

Ellis (2012) approaches her research using a mixed method design to elicit her findings. The design is a two-phase sequential one. Participants were first asked to complete a questionnaire and then completed semi-structured interviews dependant on their responses to the first step. The aim of the research was to determine if teachers who had experienced training on domestic abuse felt ‘more confident to 1) recognise when this is the case 2) know how to support, what the experiences of

these teachers were and do the themes from the interviews provide further information regarding training and confidence levels (Ellis, 2012, p.111). Four themes were identified: *Emotional factors of the teacher's role, Working within the school system, The relationship with the child and family and finally, Teachers' uncertainty about what they need to know* (Ellis, 2012). These will now be discussed in further detail.

Ellis' (2012) findings suggested that there is an emotional impact on participants experienced when supporting children and young people exposed to domestic abuse. They discussed wanting to do their 'best' but appeared unsure what they could manage to achieve. Ellis (2012) likens this experience to the concept of secondary trauma (Figley, 1995). Typically, it was noted that teachers would not usually have been considered as connected to this phenomenon, and Ellis highlights that there is justification for this to change (Ellis, 2012). Further discussions on secondary trauma can be found in the subsequent section of this work: 'Teacher Wellbeing and Emotional Impact'. The participants discussed the concept of needing to feel safe themselves within their role, as well as the importance of the following procedures as this contributes to this sense of safety (Ellis, 2012). Ellis concludes discussions on this theme to reflect that an implication from this work was that teachers:

*"need clarity in their professional boundaries and role, to contain emotional responses in order to try to make their experiences more manageable"* (Ellis, 2012, p. 113).

Ellis links the second theme discussed as being connected with Bion's (1959; 1984) concept of container/contained. She posits that her participants seemed to experience that if they were able to focus on manageable tasks then they were more able to deal with potentially un-manageable emotional responses in relation to supporting children and young people exposed to domestic abuse (Bion 1959; 1984; Ellis, 2012). Within this theme participants shared that whilst training was helpful in factual information and strategies, professional experience was felt to be equally as important to help teachers feel confident in this area of their work (Ellis, 2012).

Ellis' third theme appeared to indicate participants feel that relationships are a crucial part of supporting children and young people in connection to this phenomenon, and that this was emphasised most by the 'experienced' teachers in the study. These reflections were linked to 'knowing' these children well to observe behavioural changes which might indicate concern. Ellis notes that all her participants identified challenges for their students in the wider educational context such as issues socialising or struggling to maintain academic progress (Ellis, 2012).

The final theme of the Ellis' (2012) study raised the concept of participant uncertainty regarding how much they needed to know, and *"who knew what they knew"* (Ellis, 2012, p. 116). Ellis linked this to

the potential social collusion regarding this phenomenon, as has been mentioned in previous sections of the current study. Ellis wonders whether shame, or secrecy influenced these concerns, regarding “*what is a secret and what should be left unsaid*” (Ellis, 2012, p. 116; Mullender et al., 2002). Ellis (2012) concludes their research by highlighting how the findings might implicate the profession of Educational Psychology, pinpointing three future directions: Teacher training, Further research and Policy opportunities for EPs and Supporting Teacher wellbeing (Ellis, 2012 pp.117-118). As noted previously Ellis’ research (2012) is the study which seems to align most closely with the present research. There are however differences that will exist between the two. These are most concerned with the methodological approach that will be utilised to gather the data. Crucially, it is felt that Ellis’ use of sequential mixed methods to gain participant views could be an area for criticism. The use of a qualitative questionnaire that is subsequently reduced to quantitative data may limit the experiences of the participants to be shared; reducing their original discussions. The researcher’s thoughts on this were developed during the completion of an unpublished Research Commission in their first year of training where the views of young people were sought. In this work it was reflected that

*“it could be argued that research that includes qualitative collection of children’s perspectives that then reports them quantitatively may be limited in the extent to which it facilitates agency in children...”*  
(Dalton & Gibson, 2017, p. 2 [unpublished])

It has been asserted that if a child shares experiences, the action of which then does not affect their future in a purposeful way, this can be argued as impacting on their agency (Kelly, 2005; Dalton & Gibson, 2017[unpublished]). The researcher posits that the same concept could be applied to adult participants of research. The rationale for current study is to gather and report participant's views enabling their voices to be heard as whole as possible. Further discussion on this can be found in the Methodology chapter of this work.

Despite the methodological approach of the above study not aligning with the researcher’s own preferences as a researcher, the study prompts valuable considerations in connection to the present work. Significantly, this includes concluding that

*“It is hoped and expected that through the dissemination process the topic of domestic abuse will be elevated in both teachers’ and EPs’ consciousness”*  
(Ellis, 2012, p. 119).

In the completion of the current research, the researcher hopes to continue this agenda, maintaining the importance of this area of work for the EP profession. This feels necessary considering a remark from an EP participant in Gallagher’s (2014) study focusing on the profession’s

conceptualisation of domestic violence, who commented: “Well, it’s sort of thing nothing to do with us” (Gallagher, 2014, p.58).

Ellis (2018) further contributed to this area of research by conducting a study which explored the ‘unconscious processes’ of “*Containment and Denial*” in primary teachers working with children and families where there is domestic abuse (Ellis, 2018, p. 1). Significantly as a part of this research, Ellis noted that they completed a systematic literature search to determine if there had been additional studies since her first was published in 2012 (Ellis, 2018). Whilst she found that other research regarding domestic abuse and the teaching profession had been completed, no further studies seeking the direct experiences of teachers supporting young people exposed to domestic abuse had taken place (Ellis, 2018). The rationale for Ellis’ 2018 study sought to address the continued gap, but also was undertaken in recognition of the need of the Local Authority where the author completed the work to determine whether teachers were attending training on domestic abuse in their area and had the knowledge to follow procedures concerning this issue (Ellis, 2018).

A mixed methods approach was utilised, similar to that of her first study, using quantitative questionnaires, followed by qualitative interviews subsequently analysed through the use of thematic analysis. This decision was made in response to the author expecting that shared themes would be found between participants. IPA as an approach was considered and moved away from as the author felt that this would only offer insight into individual participant thoughts (Ellis, 2018, p. 6). The significant difference between this study over Ellis (2012) is the decision to apply discussions of the psychoanalytic concepts of containment (Bion, 1984) and denial (Hinshelwood, 1991) to the findings of the research, which followed the same four themes as outlined within her 2012 study (Ellis 2012; 2018). By applying these concepts to the findings, the author changes the direction of the ‘authority’ of the reading of the data as noted by Smith et al. (2012) who suggest that for IPA the authority of the information remains seated with the participants, that is they are represented as owning their own story. With Psychoanalytic positions, the authority of the reading moves to the researcher: moving to outside the original sharing of information and beyond the ownership of the participants (Smith et al., 2012, p. 105). Ellis’ (2018) findings regarding containment can be connected to a subsequent section of this chapter concerning teacher wellbeing (Ellis, 2018).

In the above the researcher has discussed three studies that contribute to a gap in the literature regarding hearing teachers’ experience of working with children and young people they believe are exposed to domestic abuse at home. Swedish and UK contexts have influenced the findings of the work, but crucially they share some similarities. The potential emotional impact that this area of

work may have on the teaching profession is one finding that warrants further exploration which will be undertaken in the following section of this chapter.

## 2.7 Teacher Wellbeing and Emotional Impact

It has been reasoned that the work of teachers involves a complexity of ethical, emotional and social aspects (Hargreaves, 1998; Helsing, 2007; MacGarry Klose, Lasser, & Reardon, 2012; Uitto, Joikikokko, & Estola, 2015). Markström & Mürger (2018) note that the majority of teachers' work could be argued to revolve around *"relations that involve interpreting and assessing children's skills, behaviours and emotions"* (Markström & Mürger, 2018, p. 24). The importance of building relationships in schools with the intention of managing the above aspect of teachers work cannot be underestimated, but these relationships involve emotional 'work', which at times can lead to uncertainty (Helsing, 2007; Levi & Loeben, 2004; Markström & Mürger, 2018; Uitto et al., 2015). Hargreaves (1998) has presented that teaching involves emotional understanding which can reduce the practice to be described as a form of emotional labour. He notes that in order to succeed in teaching, practitioners must have an emotional understanding of children and young people in their care as well as cognitive (Hargreaves, 1998).

In a study noted in a previous section, Markström and Mürger (2018) sought to identify the experiences of school health staff and teachers and how these impact upon decisions to report concerns for children exposed to domestic violence in the Swedish context (Markström and Mürger, 2018). They noted that in school, teachers and wider staff such as social workers, school nurses and school psychologists *"must deal with different complex psychosocial problems and dilemmas- issues that produce emotional worry/ anxiety and stress"* (Markström & Mürger, 2018, p. 25). This note appears to connect to the concept of Secondary Trauma (Figley, 1995) and was noted by Ellis (2012) in her findings as discussed in the previous section. This concept will now be explored in more detail.

The term *Secondary Trauma* has been described by Motta (2012) as:

*"the experience of negative affective, cognitive and behavioural states that result from extended and close contact with others who have been traumatized. School personnel who work extensively with traumatized children can also acquire secondary trauma reactions"*  
(Motta, 2012, p.257).

The symptoms of this concept are extensive and can include feelings of anger, depression or anxiety, emotional exhaustion and sleep problems (Motta, 2012). Motta (2012) has noted it is increasingly recognized that secondary trauma and 'vicarious' trauma (referring more specifically to the

alteration of core beliefs (Motta, 2012)) cannot be considered as entirely distinct from one another, but crucially, for the purposes of this discussion, the main connection between the two terms is the recognition of the disturbance in *“emotions and/or cognitions as a result of experiencing the effect of trauma on others”* (Motta, 2012, p. 257). It is clear from the discussions of previous studies noted in this literature review, as well as the wider expectations on teaching staff and other professionals presented in relevant legislation, that this concept could be applied to being a possible experience for teachers supporting young people exposed to domestic violence.

As noted above, the teaching role is likely to be considered as high in emotional labour (Hargreaves, 1998; Kinman, Wray & Strange, 2011) and is characterised by *“deep personal and emotional investment”* (Kirk & Wall, 2010, p.631). Much of the discussed legislation and expectations on the profession of teaching focus on the wellbeing and support of children and young people with little focus on the wellbeing of the professionals expected to manage this responsibility. Professions such as Educational Psychology, Social Work, Psychotherapy and Counselling are all offered Supervision as an essential, if not mandatory, requirement to continue to practice in a ‘safe’ emotional space and contribute to professional wellbeing (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015). Currently, this is not a practice that the teaching profession has access to as an accepted standard of support, despite calls for this to be otherwise (Jackson, 2002; Hulusi & Maggs, 2015). The space that reflective supervision offers the receiver is notably absent from the world of teaching *“in a way that is happens in no other frontline service”* (Ellis, 2018, p.8; Hawkins & Shohet, 2012). Peer support and Supervision has been found to alleviate high levels of emotional labour, with professionals receiving such being found to have lowered levels of burnout or exhaustion (Carlson, Ferguson, Hunter & Whitten, 2012; Edwards, 2016; Grandley, 2000; Pisaniello, Winefield & Delfabbro, 2012).

One of the fundamental principles underpinning the concept of supervision is arguably the concept of containment (Bion, 1959; 1961; 1984) which has been raised in earlier discussions of this chapter regarding Ellis’ findings (Ellis, 2012; 2018). In a study by Hulusi and Maggs (2015), Work Discussion Group supervision was researched as a possible strategy that may fit with the characteristics of the teaching profession (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015). The author’s noted that there appeared to be some resistance from the teachers involved in the study to the application of supervision, noting time constraints, resourcing issues and lack of space available as barriers to embedding the practice (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015). Conversely, Kinman et al. (2011) found that workplace social support appeared to alleviate the effects associated with emotional labour, reduce burnout and increase job satisfaction in teaching (Kinman et al., 2011). The present study aims to consider whether teachers identify how best to support their own wellbeing in response to working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse.

## 2.8 Conclusions and Direction of research

The review of the literature indicates that there has been increasing focus on the phenomenon of domestic abuse within the UK and the harm that exposure to such can cause our children and young people. Domestic abuse as a phenomenon is steeped in historical context which has been recognised in order to establish a wider understanding of the context that informs current legislation and policy aiming to safeguard children and young people. The pertinence of this legislation to the teaching profession has been addressed, including discussions concerning the increase in expectations on the profession within the specific context of the current socio-political climate to identify and support children and young people exposed to the phenomenon.

Relevant studies which have aimed to gain the experiences of teachers working with young people exposed to domestic abuse have been presented, including Swedish and UK contexts. To date 3 studies have addressed this, each with a slightly different approach or focus to the findings.

In this literature review, a relative 'gap' in research hearing the experiences of teachers working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse in the UK has been identified. This study aims to contribute to the relative gap in this area of research by focusing the present study on the following research questions:

- 1) *What are the experiences of Teachers who are working with children who it is believed are exposed to Domestic Abuse?*
- 2) *How do Teachers manage emotionally sensitive information in relation to these pupils?*
- 3) *Do Teachers perceive Educational Psychologists as being professionals that would be able to offer support in these matters?*
- 4) *Do Teachers identify how they could be supported when working with children exposed to domestic abuse?*

In the following chapter the researcher discusses the Methodological approach used in this research to contribute to the focus on the importance of hearing the experience of teachers who are working with children and young people they believe are exposed to domestic abuse.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction to the Chapter**

In this Chapter the methodological rationale for the study is considered. The purpose of the study is to hear and understand the experience of teachers who are working with young people who it is believed are exposed to domestic abuse at home. Firstly, it is felt that the difference between the concepts of Methodology and Method should be addressed and the importance of the distinction between the two terms outlined. The purpose of this is to appreciate the theoretical orientation of the study, its philosophical position and to enable explanation of the choice of methodology as a researcher. 'Methodology' can be described as a term to include the research design, and the approach to data analysis as well as the theoretical orientation of research (Oliver, 2014) whereas the 'method' identifies the practical techniques that are used to conduct a piece of work. The philosophical position of the methodology is determined by the researcher's epistemological and ontological position. With this in mind, the chosen methodology used for this research is Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

In this chapter the researcher discusses the rationale for the use of IPA, starting with a detailed consideration of the philosophical positions which underly the approach. To introduce this, they examine their position as a researcher in regards to their epistemological and ontological standpoint. IPA as a methodology is then presented. The concepts of Phenomenology, Hermeneutics and Idiography are explored as the philosophical underpinnings of IPA. Some limitations of the use of IPA are explored and the researcher establishes some alternative methodologies they considered as a approaches to complete this work. The researcher concludes this section by outlining the rationale identifying IPA as the most appropriate methodology to complete the research. The method of the study is presented including the participant recruitment procedure employed, and a description of the participants involved in the data gathering process. The method for the study is clarified, including justification for the use of semi-structured interviewing for the data collection. Finally, the researcher outlines the process of data analysis in accordance to the principles of IPA before presenting the importance of the ethical considerations of the research and concluding thoughts on the Methodology chapter.



### **3.2 Philosophical assumptions of the research**

The purpose of this research is to gain an understanding of teachers' experiences of working with pupils who are exposed to domestic abuse at home. A qualitative approach therefore is felt to be most appropriate as arguably the most effective way to gain an understanding of this is to hear personal accounts. Smith and colleagues (2012) present that qualitative research "tends to focus on meaning, sense-making and communicative action" (Smith et al., 2012, p. 45). With this in mind, it is fair to consider that approaching the research with an established hypothesis would not be the best fit. Instead, specific research questions will enable exploration of the topic. It is important that it is recognised that philosophical assumptions concerned with social experience will underpin the research and that these are acknowledged. These can be considered through the ontological and epistemological position of the research. The researcher's two positions concerning these concepts will now be discussed.

Carter and Little (2007) have suggested that there are three key concepts which researchers can base the foundations of conducting qualitative research within the field of the social sciences: epistemology, methodology, and method, and outline that a researcher's epistemological stance should be clarified as the first fundamental step. They argue that this should be undertaken as it is the epistemological position which in turn impacts on the methodology utilised, and subsequently upon the justification of the method used to gather evidence (Carter & Little, 2007). However, although the researcher's epistemological position is acknowledged and examined in this section of the chapter, they will first outline the ontological stance they take as a researcher as a precursor to the epistemology of the research as it is concerned with 'social phenomena' (Bryman, 2012, p.6). Mantzoukas (2004) argues a researcher's ontological position should be clarified at the outset of the research process as it directly impacts upon their epistemological positioning and following this, the researcher establishes ontological position as a prerequisite to discussions of epistemology (Mantzoukas, 2004).

#### **3.2.1 Ontology**

Ontology is argued to specifically concern the nature of the world (Thomas, 2009). Bryman (2012) holds that ontology can be described as the philosophical positions of the researcher which determine how they view the construction of the social world (Bryman, 2012). There are differing standpoints regarding researchers' approach to the social experience of the world. Some argue that reality is external, concrete in existence and that we move through this world as individuals with

little or no control over this reality (Willig, 2013). A researcher's task, if this position is to be accepted, is to work to discover an established 'truth' using a detached approach (Madill et al., 2000). Many researchers posit that our social world is constructed in that our experiences are influenced through dynamic interactions with others and therefore the existence of the nature of our social world is fluid and determined through and by our interactions. This outlines the ontological position of social constructivism, which the researcher feels represents the most appropriate position to adopt for this work (Burr, 1995; Gergen and Gergen, 1986; Smith et al., 2012). Social constructivism enables the researcher to respect the position of the 6 participants in representing their individual understanding of their own experiences through their own words, and to respect that their experiences are to be equally as valid and upheld as 'truth'.

### **3.2.2 Epistemology**

Epistemology is concerned with the 'theory of knowledge' and has its roots in philosophy (Thomas, 2009). It has been defined as concerning the "nature of knowledge", what can count as truth, and where this information can be found (Sarantakos, 2005, p.30). The researcher believes that at the heart of this research lies a deep concern for the participant and that this element of the research positions it epistemologically as being interpretivist. This is strengthened by the focus of the study upon the 'meaning making' by the participants about their subjective experiences (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). It is important to consider that as an interpretivist researcher, the subjectivity of experience is acknowledged. Equally important, is the acceptance that within the research, the subjectivity of the researcher needs to be recognised as equally as that of the participants. It has been argued that viewing knowledge as a 'passive bystander' is impossible. Instead it must be appreciated that people, researchers, take an equally active role in developing their own experiences and understandings of such. Individual experiences exist within specific contexts and knowledge of these experiences is context bound (Jaeger & Rosnow, 1998). Madill and colleagues (2000) suggest that if the same phenomena can be appreciated in different ways by different individuals, this must depend on the unique position of the individual and subsequently 'knowledge' must be considered as relative (Madill et al., 2000). The acknowledged position of interpretivist is important. In research we attempt to establish 'knowledge' of individual points of view, but this 'knowledge' and its construction will lie deep within the context of particular people, places and times (Larkin et al., 2006). This establishes that the researcher is equally a part of the research process of constructing knowledge, within their own subjective context (Jaeger & Rosnow, 1988).

As an interpretivist, the researcher is not positing that this research will produce a definite ‘truth’ on what the experiences of teachers working with pupils who are exposed to domestic abuse are, or that this ‘knowledge’ contributes to a concrete understanding of an external reality as a realist position upholds. Instead they maintain the position that as a researcher they attempt to gain an understanding of the six participant’s realities from a subjective standpoint. The chosen methodology of IPA reflects the researcher’s epistemological position and enables them to explore the perceptions of participants with the acknowledgement that both these accounts and their own attempts to draw meaning from them lie within subjectivity.

In the above section the researcher has presented their own ontological and epistemological position in order to establish a rationale for the consideration of the chosen methodological approach. In the following section the discussion of the methodology of IPA will take place in more depth and further emphasise why this approach is suitable to understand the experiences of teachers working with pupils who are likely to be exposed to domestic abuse at home.

### **3.3 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis**

#### **3.3.1 Introduction to IPA**

In this study the researcher aims to listen to and understand the experiences of teachers who are working with students that they believe are likely to be exposed to domestic abuse at home. IPA as a qualitative methodology is relatively new and was developed in the 1990s, largely due to researcher frustrations concerning the over-emphasis on quantitative methods used to explore psychological experiences (Smith, 1996). Smith (1996) argued that in order to enhance knowledge in the field of psychology, a paradigm shift must occur. The concept of the ‘paradigm shift’ was first developed by Kuhn (1962) to explain different approaches to research, arguing that paradigm changes enable researchers to see “*the world of their research engagement differently*” (Kuhn, 1962, p. 111). Researchers conduct their research within a paradigm (quantitative or qualitative) and these rely on sets of beliefs and values which determine how research should be conducted (Bryman, 2012; Oliver, 2014). The philosophical underpinnings of the approaches, such as epistemological and ontological orientations, directly impact upon the researcher’s engagement within research and as such have been explored above. Qualitative research listens to “untold stories” and therefore presents opportunities for research discovery which quantitative methods may reduce to larger, sweeping and perhaps generalizable findings (Dickson-Swift, James, Kippen and Liamputtong, 2007,

p.327). Whilst the philosophical underpinnings of qualitative methodologies do vary, the researcher has established that the methodology of IPA aligns with the research values of the study.

IPA focuses on the exploration of participant experiences and how they process and make meaning of these experiences (Smith and Osbourn, 2008). The methodology encourages participant reflection on an experience and focusses on their engagement with these reflections. There is an assumption that underlies this process: we as subjects are actively engaged in our world and that we understand this engagement by reflecting on our experience (Smith et al. 2012). Researchers using this methodology acknowledge two main aims: listening to participants expressing their position as a primary concern to gain an understanding of their worlds and then acknowledging that, as a researcher, they must attempt to make sense and interpret these positions within a specific context (Larkin et. al, 2006). This identifies IPA as using an inductive approach to focus on the individual making sense of experiences (Cohen et al., 2007). Finally, IPA's primary concern of the "*detailed examination of human lived experience*" affords the researcher the best opportunity to engage with, listen to and make sense of the participant's experiences, reflections on and meaning making of these (Smith et al., 2012, p. 32).

The current work will now explore the foundations of IPA which are based in philosophy. The three main areas as outlined by Smith and colleagues (2012) to be presented concern the philosophy of knowledge and are Phenomenology, Hermeneutics and Idiography (Smith et. al, 2012).

### **3.3.2 Phenomenology**

IPA's primary philosophical concern lies within the 'lived experience' which can be described as phenomenology. This concept has been developed by the work of a number of contributors such as Heidegger (1962/1927), Husserl (1927), Merleau-Ponty (1961/1948) and Sartre (1956/1943) (as cited in Smith et al., 2013). Philosophers approach phenomenological discussion in their own ways but the fundamental 'core' of the position is that "*experience should be examined in the way it occurs, and in its own terms*" (Smith et al., 2012, p.12). A key argument from Husserl (1927) is that "*we should go back to the things themselves*" that is that as researchers we need to consider the individual reflections on their own everyday experiences (Husserl, 1927 as cited in Smith et al. 2012, p.12). Crucially, as researchers, Husserl posits that we can too quickly 'fit things' with our own existing understanding of the world and that to think and be phenomenological we must focus on what is being said and done in its own right; we as researchers must 'self-consciously reflect' on this (Smith et. al., 2012, p.12-13).

Whilst Husserl's ideas establish the importance of focussing on experience and perception, his ideas were further developed to emphasise that interest in individual experience can be explored by examining how they consider themselves in relation to being embedded in a world of *"relationships, language and culture, projects and concerns"* (Smith et al. 2012, p. 21). This concept has been developed by the subsequent works of Heidegger (1962/1927), Merleau-Ponty (1961/1948) and Sartre (1956/1943) who built on the initial positioning of Husserl (cited in Smith et al., 2012). Crucially the combination of these philosophies enables researchers to acknowledge the complexity of experience; lying in a rich lived process which combines personal position, as well as perspective and meaning making. In using IPA, we attempt to understand others positions and this by necessity, is interpretative. In this research, the researcher therefore aims to make sense of teachers' experiences of working with students who have been exposed to domestic abuse. To do this they must acknowledge their position as a researcher, which in turn acknowledges the relationship between phenomenology and hermeneutics. Phenomenology concerns the perception of experience, which cannot be analysed without the acknowledgement of the interpretative position of the researcher (Smith et al., 2012). The theory of interpretation is known as Hermeneutics which will now be explored in the following section.

### **3.3.3 Hermeneutics**

IPA is accepted as interpretative and so Hermeneutics as a theory must be explored as a major underpinning of the approach. It is concerned with individuals understanding and interpreting their experiences of their environment. Crucially, it is posited that IPA involves a double hermeneutic, a two-stage process of interpretation (Smith, 2004, 2011; Smith et.al., 2012; Smith and Osbourn 2007). This is where the researcher attempts to make sense of, or interpret, the participants making sense of their own experiences (Dalton & Gibson, 2017 [unpublished]; Smith et. al. 2012). Within the context of this study, the researcher attempts to make sense of teachers' reflections of their own experiences of working with pupils exposed to domestic abuse. These experiences will be subjective, as will be the position of a researcher in making sense of the participant's reflections. It is acknowledged that our positions, feelings and beliefs as individuals are based in context and this must be taken into consideration. Heidegger (1927/62) wrote:

*"an interpretation is never a presuppositionless apprehending of something presented to us"* (Heidegger, 1927, 62, pp. 191/192).

Our position in being able to understand our own world is always accessed through interpretation which in turn is impacted on by our assumptions and prior experiences (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). Whilst preconceptions of understanding enable a researcher's ability to interpret, it is also possible that they may influence our understanding and interpretation of the experiences of others; that is we may see what we think we see, rather than what is there (Smith et. al., 2012). Gadamer (1960/75) highlights:

*"the important thing is to be aware of one's own bias, so that the text may present itself in all its newness and thus be able to assert its own truth against one's own fore-meanings"*

(Gadamer 1960/75, p. 238).

It is important to acknowledge that interpretations of the researcher will sit within the context of their own experiences.

A further aspect of Hermeneutic theory which is important to consider when approaching research using IPA is the hermeneutic circle. This term emphasises the significance of the interactive relationship between the whole and the parts (Smith, 2007). Such as, the meaning of parts of the whole should be understood in the context of the whole, and similarly the understanding of the whole is in relation to the understanding of the parts (Smith et. al., 2012). Primarily this aspect of hermeneutics emphasises that interpretation as process within IPA needs to be non-linear, and requires a revisiting, repeated process of engagement with the research advocating a circular interaction.

### **3.3.4 Idiography**

A final element of IPA which is crucial to acknowledge is that it is an idiographic approach; it is *"concerned with the particular"* (Smith et. al. 2012, p. 29). This position is opposed to 'nomothetic' approaches in psychology which focus on being able to make widespread and generalizable claims (Smith et al., 2012). This means that by conducting research using an IPA approach the researcher can uphold the voices of individuals in sharing their experiences, rather than losing their accounts for the purpose of making wider claims, as discussed in the Literature Review chapter of this work. A key component of this research and the position of the researcher is that the individual voice is valid, participant stories are shared and that these are not reduced to quantitative statistics, potentially affecting their agency (Kelly, 2005), or that the opinion of the researcher is considered as more important than the participant's own, as the discussion of epistemological oppression might reflect.

Importantly, whilst idiography is committed to the detailed analysis of the particular, it also seeks to understand shared meaning for groups (Smith, Harre and Van Langenhove, 1995). For example, in this research the researcher is not focusing on the teaching profession's role in supporting those exposed to domestic abuse. Rather they are hearing individual accounts of teaching professionals who have worked in this area and exploring the personal narratives of these experiences. This affords the researcher the opportunity to understand their individual perspectives, as well as considering the context of a shared profession. The researcher hopes to gain an understanding of how this aspect of professional experience may impact upon the participant's reflections on their own health and wellbeing, and that a shared meaning regarding this may emerge. Whilst it is accepted that IPA does not seek to make findings generalizable, it instead offers the opportunity that findings may hold elements of transferability between groups (Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez, 2011). This can be referred to as 'theoretical generalisability' where the reader of a work is encouraged to draw on their own experience to consider whether the findings of an IPA study can be applied to impact upon their own professional practice (Smith et. al., 2012). The researcher hopes that whilst the experiences presented in this research are specific to the individual participants, they may offer further understanding of this aspect of the teaching profession and contribute to a developing research base.

### **3.3.5 Limitations of IPA**

As with any methodology there are arguably limitations to the approach. The researcher felt it is important to acknowledge these as part of presenting the final rationale for their decision making. Firstly, as a methodology, IPA relies on participants being able to communicate their experiences through language, and that these reflections are then listened to and processed by the researcher. This places the expectation upon participants that they are first able to reflect upon their experiences and crucially are then able to shape these into language that conveys that meaning to others. Willig (2013) postulates that even when language is able to be used in such a way, typically participants are not likely to be used to sharing their thoughts and information regarding their experiences in such a manner, and so the comprehensive capacity of their sharing may not reflect their ideas accurately. It is also argued that language is in itself limited and this may restrict opportunities to share our perceptions and experiences comprehensively with others (Jaeger & Rosnow, 1988; Goodall, 2014).

Language lies at the heart of an additional consideration that needs to be acknowledged when working with IPA. Methodological approaches such as discourse or conversation analysis uphold that

the construction of an individual's reality is best understood through the analysis of a participant use of language. It has been argued that these approaches therefore can only actually focus on how people use language to share their experiences rather than using the language they use to inform an understanding of the experiences themselves (Willig, 2013). The crux of the debate lies in whether a researcher views language as a tool for construction or description alone (Goodall, 2014). It is presented that in IPA the position is maintained that there is a direct relationship between people's experiences and associated thoughts and feelings and how they use language to talk about these with others. Accepting this position, the IPA researcher can therefore view language as a medium to enable analysis of how participants make sense of their experiences (Smith & Osbourn, 2008; Smith 2011).

Finally, the researcher acknowledges that IPA is not a methodology that seeks to determine why people experience phenomena the way they do, choosing instead to focus on presenting and exploring the understanding of individual perceptions themselves. It is posited that this lack of exploration and explanation may restrict our understanding of the experience as researchers (Willig, 2013). Although the researcher acknowledges that this is a legitimate line of critique, it is felt that for the purposes of this research the primary concern of listening to participant experience is to acknowledge that this area is a part of their professional experience, and that understanding why this occurs may not provide any further insight to affect change. There is also the acknowledgement that as a researcher using IPA their role is an equal part of the process, and as such the researcher's ability to make sense of the data through interpretation and reflection, is under scrutiny (Brocki & Wearden, 2006). As a novice, the researcher must acknowledge the above and maintain that IPA as a methodology outlines such clear guidelines that this enables novice researchers to follow the process as cautiously as necessary (Smith et al. 2012).

### **3.3.6 Acknowledged Alternative Approaches**

It has been argued that a purposeful research methodology needs to maintain a strong philosophical basis to guide findings and uphold its values in the face of criticism (Pringle et. al., 2011). With this position established, it is likely that several qualitative methodologies could be considered appropriate to complete a research project. As the researcher started the process of designing the present research they hoped to complete a piece of work that focussed on the lived experience of the participants, IPA is one approach that aims to manage this, but it is not the only phenomenological approach and is a relatively new methodology, as previously discussed. Narrative Analysis is an approach that may have fit with the work the researcher hoped to complete. Its



underlying principles appeared to align closely with what they hoped the current research could achieve, particularly in relation to its emphasis on how the individual makes sense of and construct their stories (Crowley, 2014; Reissman and Quinney, 2005; Reissman and Speedy, 2006). Upon further research of the options available to the researcher they chose to opt for IPA. This was based on the recognition outlined above that as a novice researcher, IPA afforded the research a clear set of guidelines in order for the researcher to complete the work as successfully as possible.

### **3.3.7 Concluding the Rationale**

In the detailed exploration of the nature of IPA as a methodology the researcher determined that this was the approach that felt most appropriate for completing this research. This is for several reasons. IPA as a methodology is being used more frequently in a range of fields within psychology including clinical psychology (Smith, 2004, Goodall, 2014). Perhaps most importantly, Reid and colleagues (2005) have argued that IPA is an ideal methodological approach to use when researching areas that have received limited exploration previously. As discussed in the Literature Review, the researcher has been able to identify one researcher (Ellis, 2012, 2018) who has previously explored this topic, and who utilised mixed method approaches to complete the work. This consideration means that the use of IPA feels particularly appropriate for this research study. Additionally, the inductive nature of IPA enables the researcher to avoid the reliance on pre-existing literature findings to inform the analytical process: allowing them the freedom to let the participant words and experiences drive the findings with unexpected and novel opportunities.

As previously mentioned, IPA offers researchers a comprehensive structure to guide and support work throughout the process. This includes several clarifying steps and stages which will be discussed in further detail within this chapter as part of the presentation of procedures (Smith et. al. 2012). It has been acknowledged that the researcher is approaching this work from the position of a novice researcher, this knowledge enabled them a level of reassurance. As well as the structure being accessible, it is also emphasised that flexibility in the approach should also be a natural part of the research, as the researcher becomes an active part of the process as they construct their understandings of the participants understandings. Revisiting, reflection and a non-linear approach is advocated (Smith et al., 2012). Therefore, the structure of guidance becomes a reminder of the sets of principles that underly the approach rather than a 'right' way to complete research, equally providing reassurance but instilling confidence in the researcher that they can manage the research using a dynamic approach.

In this section of the Methodology chapter the researcher has aimed to provide a clear rationale to explain their choice of IPA as an approach to complete this research. The researcher presented the importance of considering the philosophical underpinnings of approaches to determine the 'best fit' for them as a researcher by establishing their epistemological and ontological positioning. The key philosophical elements of IPA – phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography were outlined. The researcher considered the limitations of the approach and acknowledged the consideration of an alternative methodology to complete the research, before concluding with the final rationale for the chosen methodology of IPA. It was determined that IPA affords the researcher a flexible framework to explore the experiences of teachers who are working with pupils they believe are exposed to domestic abuse at home. The methodology acknowledges the position of the researcher in being an essential part of the analytic process, and that this position requires a dynamic and reflective approach rather than a linear analysis. The next section will present the procedures the researcher used to complete the present study, as well as the rationale for the selection of these.

### **3.4 Sampling, Participants and Procedures**

#### **3.4.1 Sampling**

Smith and colleagues (2012) assert that when using IPA, a homogenous sample should attempt to be recruited. That is, a group of people who are not significantly diverse in demographics (Smith et al., 2012). The scope of the present study is relatively specific, despite the frequency of domestic abuse statistics as outlined in the literature review. The specificity of recruitment focussing on one profession, and the nature of this area of work within the profession the researcher would argue reduces the possibilities of overly diverse demographic characteristics. Therefore, the potential participant sample available could be relatively reduced in comparison to a larger, more general population sample. Homogeneity in this instance is recognised as being managed by working with a group of people who it is felt share insight into a specific experience (Goodall, 2014; Langdridge, 2007; Smith et. al., 2012). As it stands, the teachers that agreed to participate in this research will be treated as a homogenous group who share the experience of working within a single Local Authority and believe they are working with pupils who have been exposed to domestic abuse in their home environment. Due to the nature of this work, it is also likely that these teachers have an additional professional responsibility level within their school such as the SENCo role or a pastoral position. It is important that the researcher acknowledges that whilst the participant sample they have used is arguably made up of a relatively homogenous group, there will be a wealth of individual experiences, both professionally and personally, that will undoubtedly contribute to a range of

individual differences when considering their own experiences. Controls such as age, length of service, location of training and age of pupils they are working with have not been applied, in order to reduce the limitations of the focus of the study. The researcher's intention is that the participant voice is heard, regardless of a range of specific external criteria that may lead a reader to perceive some personal experiences as 'valid' or 'invalid'.

IPA as a methodology has been presented as challenging the *"traditional linear relationship between number of participants and value of research"* (Reid et al. 2005, p. 22). Due to its idiographic nature, small sample sizes are deemed more appropriate, allowing for in-depth analysis. The researcher has chosen to use Smith et al's (2012) approach to completing this research, who uphold that students (such as the researcher) undertaking professional doctorates would typically be expected to engage in 4 to 10 interviews (Smith et.al., 2012). It was felt by the research governance framework of the LA where the research was conducted that to drop below the number of 6 participants may lead to a more likelihood of identifying data being present. As the researcher felt strongly that the importance of the individual story remains of primary concern, without losing their voices within a larger sample size, they were able to maintain that 6 would be the maximum number where participant voice could be upheld. It was felt that this sample size enabled the researcher to remain true to the individual story of the participants whilst equally providing a good opportunity to explore transferability as well as reflect on differences between experiences.

### **3.4.2 Access and Process of recruiting participants**

The research was conducted in one large unitary Local Authority. As the topic of the research concerned the discussion of sensitive information, as many IPA studies do, it was likely that a gatekeeper would initially be contacted prior to access to final participants. The researcher felt it important that before asking individual participants to share their experiences, Headteachers should first be contacted to seek permission for their schools to participate in the research. After a team meeting where the researcher presented their research ideas and hopes to the Educational Psychology Service, EPs were able to suggest possible schools where professional experiences of casework and working relationships with staff would highlight these settings as being appropriate for the researcher to seek permission to recruit participants. It was also suggested that the researcher work closely with the Local Authority's multi agency referral unit manager who was able to identify areas of the LA where higher levels of domestic abuse as an area of concern was likely to be reported. An information sheet, consent forms and participant information and consent forms (as information for Headteachers to understand what would be expected of participants) as well as the

confidentiality protocol, was sent to specifically identified school Heads and shared via their school's link EP during visits (Please see Appendices 5-9). After receiving consent from Headteachers to recruit participants from their institutions, participant recruitment occurred in two different ways. Two Headteachers returned responses confirming that they gave permission for the study to take part and that they had signposted this to specific staff they felt would likely fit the criteria for the research, who in-turn returned consent to participate. Additionally, staff that had heard of the study through colleagues and networking contacted the researcher via their link EP to volunteer participation, after consent had been received from the Headteacher of these schools. Each participant was contacted individually to arrange interview dates, time and preferred venues. This will be discussed in more detail in the following section.

### **3.4.3 Venue for interviews**

The interviews were conducted in a venue of the participant's choice. The researcher had initially anticipated that these would likely be off site and perhaps out of typical school-working hours. As it turned out, all participants chose for the interview to be conducted during their school day and within the school setting. This preference prompted much reflection which can be found within the appendices of this work and perhaps offered an indication of participant's positioning within the school that this was achievable for them. Additionally, this ability to manage interviews within the confines of a typical school day perhaps demonstrated the value that the Senior Leadership Teams (SLT) of the school placed in the participation of the research. All the interviews were conducted in a quiet room with a closed door so that confidentiality could be upheld.

### **3.4.4 Sample and Participants**

A purposive sampling method was used to recruit participants. A detailed breakdown of the recruitment procedure can be found in the above section 3.4.2. The final sample of participants consisted of six professional teachers; with a representation of both sexes. The participants were recruited from both Primary and Secondary Settings and were representative of both genders. All participants managed additional responsibilities within their schools such as being the setting SENCo or working pastorally. Two of the participants interviewed were the designated safeguarding leads for their settings.

These demographics mean that each individual experience is unique; setting hierarchy, methods of working and training opportunities will differ greatly, but that the opportunity for transferability remains, as does the relative homogenous nature of the sample.

Further details of the sample of participants of the present research now follows. For the purposes of maintaining anonymity in a small sample, gender neutral pseudonyms have been used for each participant.

**Participant 1:**

Quinn is a Senior member of the Senior Leadership Team in the school where they work and manages multiple roles of responsibility as part of this structure. They have over 20 years of experience in teaching across different local authorities.

**Participant 2:**

Frankie is a member of the Senior Leadership Team in the school where they work and manages additional roles as part of this level of management. They have over 10 years of experience in teaching over several local authorities.

**Participant 3:**

Rowan is an established member of staff within their school and has over 15 years' experience working in the Local Authority. They have recently reduced their role at school to focus solely on supporting the social emotional mental health of pupils at their setting.

**Participant 4:**

Riley recently qualified as a teacher. They worked within their setting as a support member of staff prior to qualification. Their current role is the first qualified position they have held.

**Participant 5:**

Bobby is an experienced teacher who has multiple roles as part of the Senior Leadership Team of their setting. They have over 15 years of experience across several Local Authorities, have worked in different settings within the Local Authority where this study takes place and have worked in their current setting for a notable period.

**Participant 6:**

Charlie is a member of the Senior Leadership Team in the school where they work. They have over 10 years' experience of teaching and have managed multiple roles of responsibility during this time. They have worked in several settings across the Local Authority and considers themselves a fairly new member of the team in their current setting.

In the above section the researcher considered the studies sampling and participant demographics.

### **3.5 Data collection**

#### **3.5.1 Semi-structured interviews and interview design**

To complete this research, the researcher opted to use semi-structured interviewing. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2012) recommend that the data collection method that suits IPA enables participants to offer “*rich, detailed first-person account*” and encourages the “*elicitation of stories, thoughts and feelings*” (Smith et.al. 2012, p.56). It was felt that semi-structured interviewing offered the idiographic opportunities that the researcher hoped for, and it is acknowledged that this is perhaps the most popular choice of method adopted by IPA researchers (Reid et. al., 2005). The structural element of the interview schedule would afford a little security as a novice researcher to manage to answer the research questions, whilst simultaneously the freedom for a ‘natural conversation’ to develop between the researcher and the participants. Smith and colleagues note this technique of data gathering can be described as “*conversation with a purpose*” (Smith et al., 2012, p. 57) Importantly the use of semi-structured interviewing can allow flexibility to adapt questioning in line with the direction that participant is moving in, creating a flow for their story and expression of experience as a opposed to juxtaposing questioning that could interrupt and change the course of the conversation in line with the needs of the researcher, as opposed to the needs of the participant (Smith et. al, 2012). A copy of the interview schedule can be found in the appendices (please see Appendix. 12).

#### **3.5.2 The Interviews**

Each participant completed a single interview. They were completed at participant settings in quiet and confidential spaces so privacy could be upheld. The duration of the interviews ranged from 28 minutes to 1 hour and 7 minutes. The interviews were recorded on a digital recorder and as well as consenting to this within their consent form, permission to record the interviews was additionally confirmed in person before the start of every interview. Due to the nature of the role, the ability to build rapport with professionals relatively quickly is vital. The researcher had taken the decision to not consider recruiting participants from schools where they act as a link EP (in their capacity as a TEP). Initial contact through emails, phone calls and face to face meetings were opportunities to establish a level of rapport prior to the interviews commencing.

The interview schedule was on hand to act as a prompt if necessary, but this was not followed rigidly. Not all questions on the schedule were asked to all participants. Instead the researcher enabled the participants to take the lead once the initial question had been posed. This enabled the participants to process and share their experiences in their own way and through their unique perspectives. This felt important as the researcher upholds that the participant voice should be valued as a priority, acknowledging that whilst a researcher makes sense of their sense making, this should be respectful to their participant's expressed position and not that of their own. After every interview the researcher recorded themselves as they reflected upon the experience to acknowledge their position as part of the data gathering process and to contribute to developing their skills as a researcher. It felt that some of the questions asked held more meaning to some participants than others, which is where the interview schedule flexibility really felt supportive as a tool. One participant acknowledged that whilst they felt they had lots to share, they had reached their capacity of what they wished to share on record, and so the interview recording concluded. They then continued to discuss their experiences, outside of the role of participant, until they felt comfortable finishing their discussions.

### **3.6.1 Data analysis**

The researcher transcribed the interviews to enable in-depth analysis of each participant interview transcript. As mentioned before, Smith and colleagues (2012) have outlined that IPA analysis is not linear, work which uses this approach is characterized by several levels of interpretation. An 'iterative and inductive cycle' is used and is identified by line by line analysis of the transcriptions of the accounts of participants (Smith 1996, 2004, 2007; Smith et al., 2012). In depth analysis is enabled through the relationship that develops between the researcher, their psychological knowledge and their coded data (Smith et al., 2012). As was outlined as part of the rationale for the use of IPA as an approach for completing this research, Smith and colleagues have developed a step by step guide for novice researchers to be able to access a complex and in-depth analytical approach to their data (Smith et al., 2012). The researcher presents the 6-stage step by step process they followed to complete the research below.

#### **1) Reading and re-reading**

The researcher began with listening to the audio recordings of the transcripts and re-read the transcripts alongside to familiarise themselves with each interview. This was followed with the close examination of one transcript at a time.

## 2) Initial noting

In this stage the researcher began initial noting at a very exploratory level. They noted interesting comments, topics that seemed to recur. This step, although time consuming, felt an important early stage of their engagement with the transcript analysis as it enabled the researcher to begin to really hone in on the intent of the meaning behind specific phrases, words and emotions conveyed within these. Listening to the audio for each transcript as the researcher managed this step allowed them to hear tone of voice, silences, laughter, and other non-linguistic cues that could convey meaning for the participant. The researcher found this stage easier to work through by making notes on hard copies of transcriptions within the margins initially. They then tried to assemble these into an order by using a table for 'exploratory comments' as presented by Smith and colleagues (Smith et. al. 2012). This meant the initial noting went through an additional process of reflection and seeking meaning by the researcher.

## 3) Developing emergent themes

This stage aimed to work through the exploratory notes to find further emerging themes. This stage required the researcher to really reflect on what themes were emerging according to what the participants were saying and their interpretation of this. Concise statements were then created to represent these emergent themes. This process intends to reduce large volumes of initial noting into more manageable and representative themes (Smith et al. 2012). The researcher has provided an example of the exploratory commenting and emergent themes within the Appendices (please see Appendices 13-15).

## 4) Searching for connections across emergent themes

In this step the researcher looked for emerging patterns between themes, attempting to seek connections. This step seemed to have much more structure than the previous steps and enabled a sense of the work forming productively. As recommended by Smith and colleagues (2012), ordering the themes chronologically is useful (Smith et. al., 2012). Once the list was completed, a table of themes was developed which included example quotes to evidence the origin of the text of the themes within.

## 5) Moving to the next case

The researcher then approached the remaining transcripts using the same steps as before by following stages 1 through to 4. For each participant the above was completed, including the development of new themes within the context of their own individual transcripts.



## 6) Looking for patterns across cases

Finally, after the researcher had completed the above stages for all the transcripts, they needed to start to seek connections across the individual case themes. The importance of retaining the individual experience, meaning making and voice whilst upholding a position of shared themes became crucial. The overarching themes identified in the second sequential step of the analysis were:

- Emotional Impact
- Strategies for Support
- Relationships: YP & Team/colleagues
- Current context

Whilst the step by step guide by Smith et al (2012) provided an easy to use guidance, the analytic process of IPA requires much more in-depth moving backwards and forwards through these stages than the simplified steps might first indicate. This is acknowledged within the text, as is the emphasis that there is not a 'right' way to move through this process as the researcher is equally part of the process (Smith et. al., 2012). In the above section the researcher outlined the process of the data analysis strategy used within this piece of work in accordance to the recommended steps upheld by the methodology of IPA.

### **3.6.2 Accounting for Researcher Subjectivity**

As part of the rationale for the researcher's decision making regarding which methodology would be considered most appropriate for the purposes of the present research, the consideration of IPA as a methodology acknowledging the researcher's own subjectivity was emphasised as being crucial as part of this process. It was noted that the researcher identifies as an individual who has experienced domestic abuse in the past and as such careful reflection regarding their own subjectivity needed to take place. The process which was followed as a way to account for this subjectivity will now be outlined.

As noted above, the researcher recorded their own reflections on the experiences of interviewing the studies participants diligently after each interview was completed. These were completed whilst on the return journey from the interview locations. This strategy was felt to afford the researcher an element of immediacy as well as the capacity to freely reflect without second-guessing, hesitation, or 'polishing' their initial and immediate responses to the interviews. Once all interviews had taken place and the data analysis process began, the reflection recordings were listened to after stage 1

and subsequently stage 2 (as outlined above) for each transcription. At points of hesitation during the data analysis process these recordings could be referred to as a precaution for reducing researcher bias, or subjectivity, as much as possible. They afforded the researcher the opportunity to acknowledge any personal feelings that may have been applied to different moments in each interview and recognise these as just that, rather than allow these instinctive understandings or responses to phrases or sections of dialogue to become immersed within the final analysis of the data. This was managed as an attempt to continue to uphold the participant's voice as much as possible in a whole capacity: presenting what was felt they meant, rather than what was potentially inferred. This became a particularly important aspect of the data analysis process when considering the subjectivity and individual nature of working professionals sharing their own responses which may not have always aligned with the researcher's own subjective positioning.

### **3.7 Ethical considerations**

This research was designed and conducted in accordance with the Code of Human Research Ethics (BPS, 2018). Ethical approval for the research was granted by The School for Policy Studies Research Ethics Committee at the University of Bristol in February 2018 and subsequently granted approval by the Research Governance Framework committee of the LA where the research was completed in October 2018 (please see Appendices 10 & 11). It was of great importance that the research process upheld respect and trust during design and implementation throughout the research process. Particular attention was paid to ensure confidentiality, informed consent and reduction of the potential for harm, including the right to withdraw from the research remained at the forefront of the research. The teachers within this study had the necessary competence to give informed consent and were provided with a detailed information sheet both prior to offering consent and at the start of any interviews being conducted, as well as the confidentiality protocol of the study. They were reminded of their right to withdraw at the completion of the interviews. All documentation shared with the participants were approved by both ethical committees noted above (please see Appendices 5-9). Any personal information that could possibly identify the participants or individuals that may have been discussed as illustrative examples remained confidential and identifying information has been removed from the transcripts. The participants of this study have been assigned gender neutral pseudonyms to reduce the possibility that identifying information can be noted due to a recognition of the gender of the limited number of participants. The teachers who took part in this study were informed via the provided documentation of the research that the interviews would be recorded and consent to do this was verbally confirmed prior to each interview

commencing. During transcription, personal information was removed and replaced with neutral wording such as 'setting name' or 'location'. Documentation provided to the participants ensured transparency about what steps would be taken to ensure confidentiality as well as the intended use of the data collected.

### **3.8 Summary**

In the Methodology chapter of this research the researcher has provided the rationale for the use of IPA as an approach to managing the research. This included considerations of the theoretical underpinnings of IPA, their epistemological and ontological positioning, limitations of this approach and the final conclusions determining their choice of methodology as a novice researcher. The researcher outlined the procedures the study followed and clarified sampling and participant recruitment. The method of data analysis was discussed. Finally, the researcher presented the ethical considerations they undertook to ensure the study upholds the ethical principles of respect and trust.

## Chapter 4: Findings

### 4.1 Chapter summary

In this chapter the researcher presents a narrative account of the experiences of 6 teachers working with children and young people who they believe are exposed to domestic abuse at home. In the Methodology chapter of this research the researcher noted the interpretative nature of this study and so all presentation of findings will be the result of interpretation by themselves as a researcher. The chapter will initially be approached in two parts which reflect the process of the analysis that was completed. A final third part will present the identification of teachers within this research of how best to offer them support in this matter, including whether the profession of Educational Psychology is identified as being helpful in this. As noted in the Methodology chapter of this research each participant was assigned a gender-neutral pseudonym to contribute to reducing identifying data within a small participant sample. Gender identifying terminology such as the use of 'he', 'her' and 'his' etc have been avoided and instead the words 'their' and 'they' and 'theirs' have been used. Each participant was considered separately so that their individual experiences were upheld as the focus of the work rather than approaching wider generalizations and the findings will represent each individual experience separately as a priority. A visual model of the findings for each participant has been used to represent and reflect the interactive nature of the themes discussed by each individual. This model has been further clarified from the individual tables of themes found within the appendices (please see Appendix. 14) to reflect the interviewees emphasis and focus. Whilst the themes discussed by several participants appear to be similar, the approaches they took when discussing them has influenced the way the model of interaction has been interpreted. It is hoped that by using this approach the models representing each participant reflect the individual story, rather than fitting with a singular model of thematic interaction.

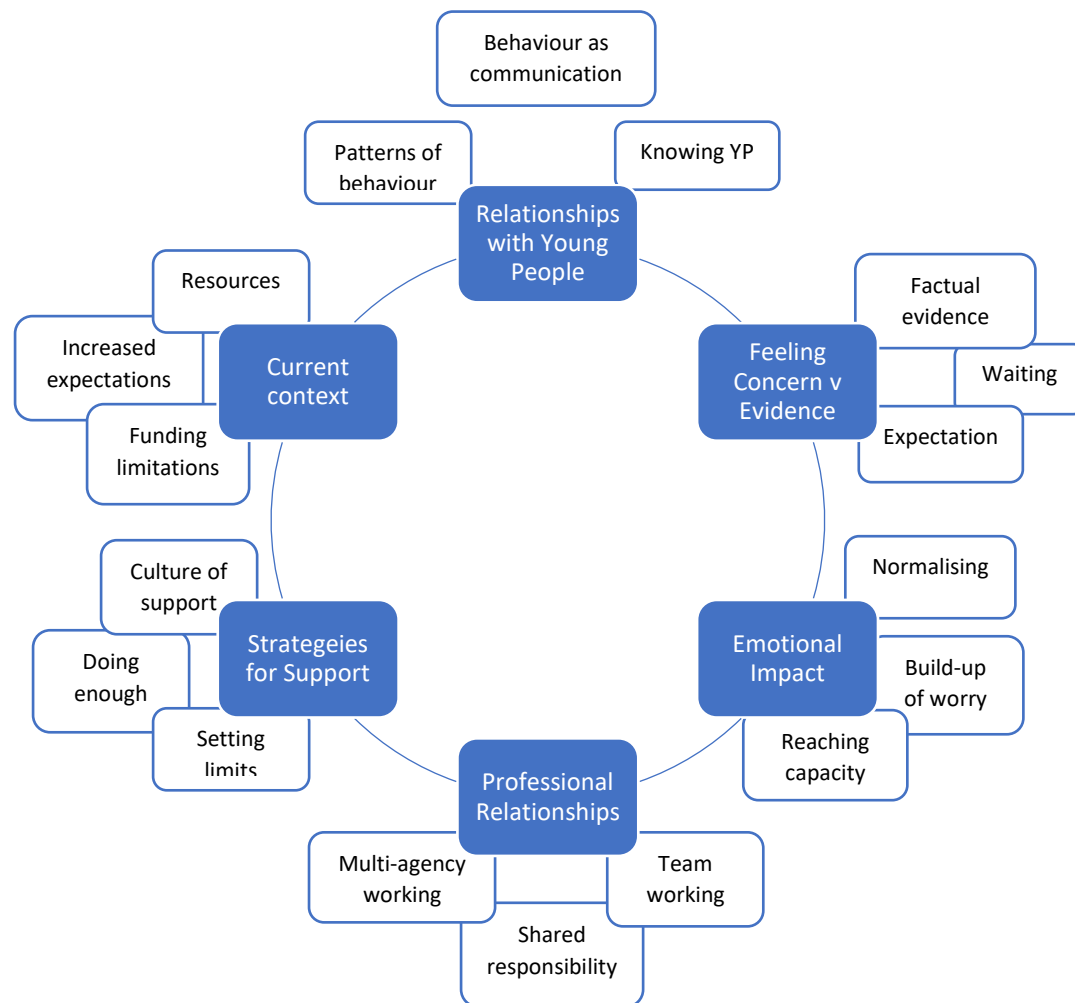
The aim of this research was to hear teachers' experiences of working with children and young people who it is believed are exposed to domestic abuse at home. The first part of this chapter focusses on representing these individual experiences using visual models of thematic interaction to support this understanding. The second part of this chapter considers the potential overarching themes which can be drawn from the data. This section potentially presents a shared experience across the teaching profession in how individuals manage working within the current socio-political context. Within this section the consideration of whether participants identify Educational Psychologists as professionals that may offer support in these matters is discussed. Comments

regarding this aspect of the research were often intertwined with discussions of the reality of the current context of the working environment.

## 4.2 Analysis of Teacher Participants

### 4.2.1 Quinn

Quinn is a Senior member of the Senior Leadership Team in the school where they work and manages multiple roles of responsibility as part of this structure. They have over 20 years of experience in teaching across different local authorities.



### Relationships with Young People

*"I think we then get into that next layer of when ... we get ... young people behaving aggressively, attachment difficulties, or... an inability to demonstrate pro-social behaviours ...then that's always at the back of your mind. What are the drivers of that?"*

*“whilst [yp] was with us [they] got more heavily involved in that, lots of risk-taking behaviours ...I think that there’s an awful lot more to look at and I’m, I’m asking questions”*

*“..and they’ve probably thought through the process of, ‘actually, that’s just what happens in our family but I know I shouldn’t tell anybody about it”.*

*“how do we pick them up, identify them and all the rest of it ... we are getting reams and reams and reams of kids coming through, umm ... with anxiety, emotional difficulty, self-harming”*

Quinn discussed that to best support young people where there was a belief that they had been exposed to domestic abuse at home, and other safeguarding concerns, there needed to be a strong relationship established between themselves and the young people. This was reflected upon within the context of understanding behaviour as communication, and in order to best recognise areas of concern Quinn emphasised the importance of knowing those young people well. Quinn seemed to suspect that many young people would be hesitant to share concerns regarding domestic abuse. They felt that it was likely that young people had begun to draw comparisons regarding their own home experiences and others and had likely developed an understanding that this is not talked about. Quinn expressed that they felt there were increasing amounts of concern regarding young people’s emotional mental health and so they were needing to become increasingly vigilant to note what might be the underlying concern for these in order to best plan effective support.

### **Feeling Concern v Evidence**

*I’ve only had out of, something like 600 referrals this academic year...only 7 of those have been self-referred in relation to domestic abuse”*

*“... what we actually know... then that’s always at the back of your mind, is ...what are the drivers of that?”*

*“we’re waiting for a disclosure, we’re waiting for...a disclosure....w-we don’t often get them from those sorts of kids”*

*“I think that there’s an awful lot more to look at and I’m, I’m asking questions”*

*“and the things that [yp] hasn’t said about what’s gone on at home... yeah, I’d put, you know...a-a good few, good few pounds on the fact that, you know that one door to be disclosed, it’s not the only one”*

*“we had five things logged. Low... I’ll...use the word low ...but not referable level.”*

Quinn discussed throughout the interview that although they had concrete evidence for a few cases within their setting where domestic abuse was known to be part of a young person’s home experience, they suspected that there were likely to be many more. They noted that they were frequently waiting for disclosures, indicating that there was a certain level of expectation that one would come. They reflected that often, it was not the young people that offered disclosure in cases of exposure to domestic abuse, perhaps linked to a belief that young people were learning to not share this. Quinn discussed that they were often gathering evidence that would indicate concern for a young person but that these may not meet the threshold for safeguarding referrals for social care involvement.

### **Emotional Impact**

*“I’ve had, I’ve had, kind of ... yeah, numerous sleepless nights. I think, what I find is, it’s not individual cases... ..that you worry about, the volume, what you’re worrying about is, is the cumulative of um  
... Have we done the right thing for that?”*

*“one [team member] has handed [their] notice in last week...because [they] can’t manage that anymore... [they’re] just, full, I guess... just hasn’t got the emotional capacity...”*

*“I think yooooou just get used to it....And there’s a degree of anxiety”*

*“so that’s, although that’s a lower level worry, it’s more of a wearing worry than some of the big ones?”*

*“every time you stop and think about it for too long you just, you can get yourself in a bit of a s-state”*

Quinn seemed to accept that working with young people who are likely to be exposed to domestic abuse at home (and other safeguarding concerns) would have an emotional impact. The researcher felt as if this may reflect a level of normalising for Quinn, which appeared to be evidenced within their comment of ‘you just get used to it’. They recognised that their worry regarding young people they worked with had impacted on their home life and that often it was not the individual that caused this, rather the accumulation of many cases where the worry was present. Quinn linked this worry specifically to the issue of doing the ‘right thing’. The researcher sensed this was not only in



response to Quinn considering the right thing for the young person, but equally in protecting their school and team. Quinn noted that there was an acceptance that there was a possibility to reach emotional capacity and that a colleague had recently experienced this. Quinn reflected that at times, thinking about it too much might cause increasing problems for their own well-being.

### **Professional Relationships**

*"I've got a team of four other assistant...safeguarding leads...We meet fortnightly, umm ... we've all got other pastoral responsibilities as well....so we've got a pretty good handle between us"*

*"day to day basis we're still making decisions about, not about um, who could do with a bit of a chat we're d... our decisions are driven by who's most at risk of significant harm."*

*"a good safeguarding culture within your [setting] ... we had ... by Christmas we had five things logged"*

*"they sat on it, coz we put it in just before half term, they sat on it over half term and then they got ducks in a line ... police and social care ready to go... So we're now mopping up the pieces"*

Quinn discussed professional relationships as being a large part of their experience of supporting young people exposed to domestic abuse and seemed to take comfort in the fact that they were part of a team which shared responsibility for this. They discussed the importance of a whole school approach to safeguarding, and how this enabled a positive accumulation of evidence necessary for referrals. This will be discussed in further detail in the theme 'Strategies for Support' below. Quinn seemed to feel that despite being part of a team they were still having to handle and prioritise the highest level of concerns for young people, rather than having the capacity to support as many as they would hope to. Quinn also noted the importance of successful Multi-agency working to support young people. They reflected that whilst this was often successful regarding recognitions of concern and support needed for young individuals, school staff were ultimately the professionals who were left responsible for establishing and offering that support.

### **Strategies for Support**

*"we try to be as accepting as and, and as inclusive as we possibly can...we try to identify, where possible, what the need is"*

*“we do safeguarding training and when we do our SEN training, we talk about inclusion, we talk about generating a climate for learning...foundation stone for all of those things... a culture where they feel safe, from a safeguarding perspective and emotionally held”*

*“all we can do is just say, ‘we’ve done everything that we can’”*

*I’ve got bad before and just worked myself into the ground...I now have a ... rule ... agreement with my [partner]... you’ve got to be able to rationalise... ‘d’you know what, I’ve done sixty hours, that’s enough”*

*“I’d already talked to [EP name] and [EP name] as a work plan for this year, that we were going to introduce some supervision...”*

Throughout the interview Quinn discussed the importance of a whole school approach to offering effective support for young people, and it felt that establishing and maintaining this offered them some comfort from the potential emotional impact that involvement with this phenomenon may be causing. Practical strategies such as whole staff safeguarding training and SEN training were noted. Quinn reflected that creating a culture in school where young people felt safe was a positive step in being able to offer them support. Quinn appeared to link this to the concept of self-protection where they were able to stand back and say with confidence that they had done ‘everything that we can’. They were clear that they had found it necessary based on previous negative experiences to be able to draw a line under their responsibilities after a point and save some space in the week for family time. Quinn acknowledged that not all their colleagues were able to manage this and so had proactively contacted the EP team to invest in Supervision.

### **Current context**

*“a lot of people who end up in education do so because they’ve got that sort of underlying, caring,...want to support people and you come through a system where... you have to work hard...if you’re not meeting the standard then you work harder..... that is very much the culture within education”*

*“you just, yeah, you just keep going ... and you keep going ...put that in the context of... the financial climate...Then it makes it...even harder”*

*“last year I didn’t have any money to do it [supervision]. This year, we’ve used some of our [LA specific] funding...to try and get something up and running with [EP name]... but, we’ve got a deficit next year...I’m not gonna be able to spend”*

*“you just work harder [deep breath] they squeeze and squeeze and squeeze, there’s nothing else to give now...and it is harder and harder to do even, even the little stuff so ... y-what the sorts of the conversations round the photocopier, the just stopping and chatting to someone and coz you... nobody’s got time...to just chat to colleagues”*

Quinn frequently commented on the current context of the wider socio-political climate and how they felt this was impacting upon their working experience. They discussed the increasing expectations on the education sector and cited that there was an existing culture in education that was reliant on a conscientious and caring profession working harder to meet these increasing expectations. They reflected that they felt the profession was reaching the point where there was little left to give and that this was likely to cause further problems for their wellbeing in future. This was discussed by the reduction in being able to simply connect with colleagues as time as a resource became increasingly limited. Quinn noted that they recognised staff connecting with others was essential and that they had managed to fund supervision from the EP service. This was discussed within the context of funding implications for accessing support, as Quinn shared that this may not be possible to sustain in the future.

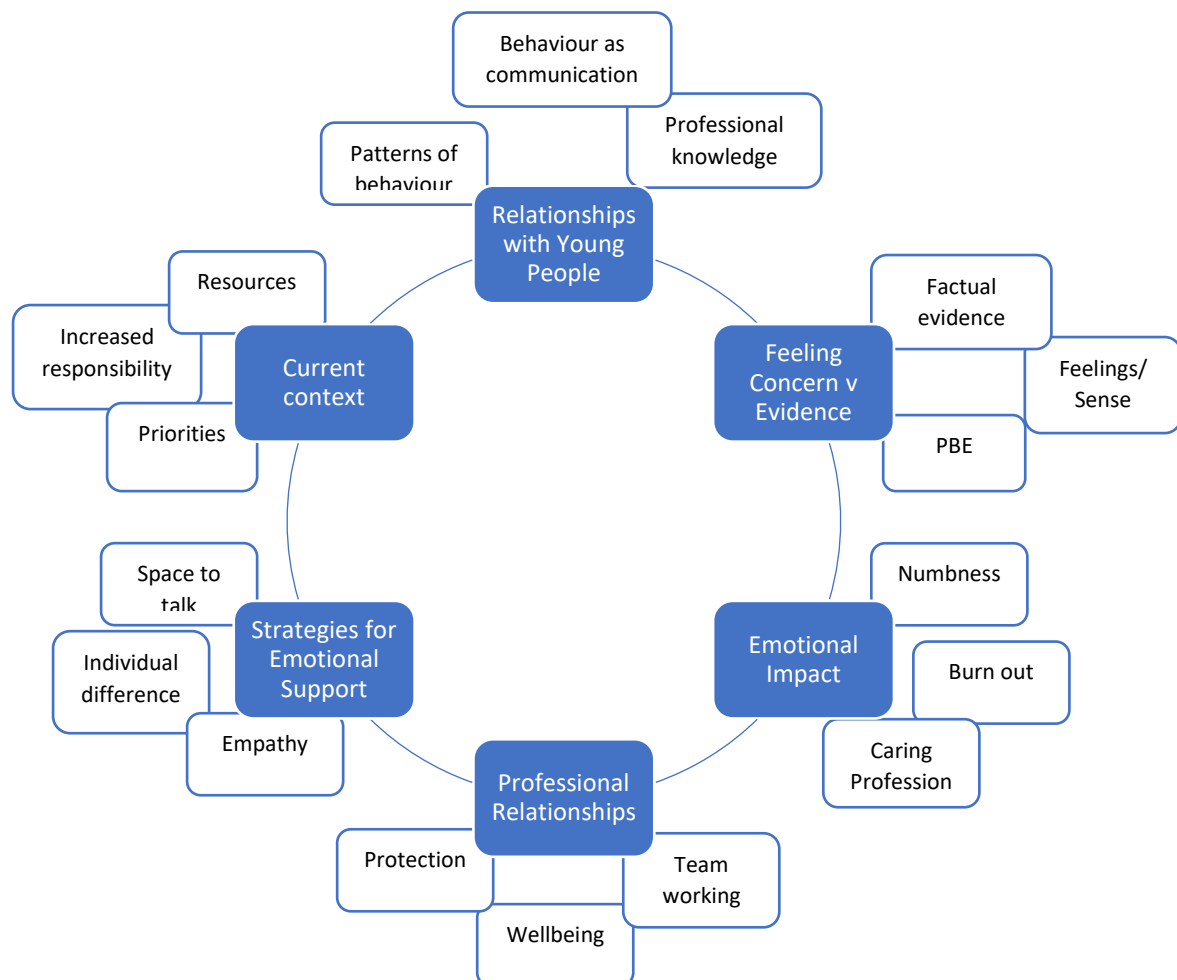
### **Reflecting on Quinn’s story**

Quinn emphasised the importance of establishing relationships with the young people they worked with in order to inform how they offered support. They noted that this seemed to becoming increasingly important as the increase in young people experiencing emotional and mental health problems was requiring staff to be increasingly vigilant to identify safeguarding concerns. Quinn noted that there was often a lack of tangible evidence in the form of young people disclosing concerns to support referrals to wider agencies. They felt that they often were waiting for concrete evidence in order to establish the need for safeguarding support. Quinn appeared to accept that emotional impact was likely to happen as a result of this aspect of their work and noted that this, for them, seemed to link to the accumulation of the many worries rather than the individual cases. They discussed comfort from working as part of a team and that creating a wider culture of support enabled them to feel that they were proactively doing something to improve outcomes. Quinn noted that there was a particular socio-political context which they felt was impacting their profession,

both in the increasing expectations of responsibility on them as well as the financial climate imposing restrictions on accessing support.

#### 4.2.2 Frankie

Frankie is a member of the Senior Leadership Team in the school where they work and manages additional roles as part of this level of management. They have over 10 years of experience in teaching over several local authorities.



#### Relationships with Young People

*"[young person] had seen some sort, some sort, sort of fairly tr-traum-traumatic events in his life...  
umm.....obviously just completely just fell apart"*

*"when [yp] was leaving they gave me that, and they made that and I was quite like awww....clearly  
meant a lot to them"*

*"they'd go through this kind of strange cycle where every so often they would like really hate me ...  
was shouting at me... ... coz of what they'd seen between their mum and dad"*

*“they would go for like weeks of just, just despising me and then weeks of being fine with me”*

*“a lot of them have experienced trauma, it’s always interesting looking at their response and how they deal with you”*

*“I was talking with [them] about what [they] were going through”*

Throughout the interview Frankie shared how their relationships with the young people they worked with informed their understanding of young people’s experiences. Relationships appeared to be key to Frankie in order to plan and deliver the best approach to offer young people support based on their professional understanding of behaviour as communication and experiences influencing how young people present. The relationship between teacher and young person was frequently discussed throughout the interview as being intricately connected to how Frankie then responded to that young person, based on their professional knowledge and supported others in the team to do so also.

Frankie noted that the importance of the relationships formed with young people enabled a meaningful connection between the two. They used examples to illustrate moments when they realised the relationship was valued by individual young people. These connections were felt to support young people’s outcomes by offering them a safe space to talk when they needed to.

### **Safeguarding: Feeling concern versus Evidence**

*“those are the ones where we knew things had happened and then we had some where ... you suspect but you don’t know”*

*“There should be really on the paperwork, there should be a kinda like a tick box that says like ‘I’ve got a load of things’. It’s like you need a tick box for like I’ve got a feeling...”*

*“there’s no tick box for ‘I’ve got a feeling’. So it is, it is frustrating”*

During the interview, Frankie shared that there were times when safeguarding concerns for young people they worked with hinged on feeling something was wrong rather than knowing for certain. It felt that these feelings for Frankie were just as important as concrete evidence and should be able to be accepted at referral level to outside agencies such as social care. Accumulation of lots of concerns was presented as needing to be recognised as equally as larger, perhaps more concrete concerns. The researcher sensed that Frankie’s ‘feeling’ concern linked directly to their wider knowledge and

understanding of the young people they worked with, formed through the relationships discussed above. There was also a sense that accumulated knowledge through practice experience ((Practice Based Evidence (PBE)) was likely to be impacting upon Frankie's suspicion of concern.

### **Emotional Impact**

*"I became so...dulled to it. Ummm. And it does dull you...It just becomes.....yeah just one of those things."*

*"it's like everyone else is like their their their their meter is set a lot lower than yours, yours has just been kind of gradually creeping up"*-anecdotal account of what a colleague explained to Frankie about their capacity to feel.

*"very intense and you know it burnt me out"*

*"Whether that's the right thing or not, I don't know ... It's the right thing for me ... the right thing for the kids..?"*

*"if you are conscientious, you need the soft bit a lot more than you need the hard bit ..."*

*"Traumatising...I think is a good word"*

Frankie discussed the emotional impact that working with young people where there were concerns of exposure to domestic abuse at home had caused. They noted that frequent exposure to working with cases where this was the concern was 'traumatising'. Frankie reflected that in the past this had affected their capacity to feel emotion, becoming 'dull' to it, and that this had at some point in their past resulted in 'burn out'. As a result of this Frankie manages their role at school in a particular way (further discussed in the theme Strategies for Support), and that whilst they feel this decision may be the best for them, Frankie questions whether it is best for the young people they work with. Potentially Frankie feels guilt about needing to prioritise their own welfare at times above that of the young people they work with.

### **Professional Relationships**

*"Have they got the support that they need? No, I don't think that they have"*

*"I do watch people and I think... I can see you're making mistakes that I you know I can see it becoming ... burnt out is the phrase"*

*"my current line manager... does a lot of work with me and its, it's very handy'n helpful...has a very different background to me ... you need someone to show you what normal looks"*

*"[YP] had a very.... overtly intense relationship with [staff member]. Which we were protecting, protecting [them] from, from that kind of thing".*

Frankie talked about the need to support the team within their current role and that their own experience has prompted them to recognise concern for others. They noted that at present their own manager is supportive and that is helpful. Frankie frequently discussed working as part of a team throughout the interview, whether that was team members offering each other emotional support or sharing responsibility when working together applying interventions with young people. It was also noted that the concept of safeguarding was not solely applied to young people. Frankie discussed that staff needed to be protected too, particularly when forming relationships with young people who had experienced challenging circumstances as these relationships can become 'intense'. Frankie used the term 'we' throughout the interview which the researcher felt is representative of Frankie feeling part of a team.

### **Strategies for Emotional Support**

*"I overtly, deliberately, stay away from safeguarding [role]....so part of my support structure is ah... I don't touch safeguarding [role]"*

*"it's that staff having a chance to offload ...and discuss and talk"*

*"the EP team you know the EP team having the ability to give us someone to talk to ...and offload stuff and that's really important".*

*"It needs to be the right team but there is the right way of burnin' off ...that, that, that ... that stress, you know"*

*"I think it depends on the person. So some people are good at putting things into boxes... and putting the box on the shelf. I'm good at that..... e-e-even if you're good at putting things in the box 'n putting it on the shelf you still need someone to talk to".*



*"I think part of it is just knowing that you have someone that you can talk to and it's not that they have all the answers ... oh my god that'd be amazing, it's about having someone ...who's just there and 'god I know yeah, it's shit yeah'...'I understand' you know, in your school. Someone to hold your emotional sick bucket for you."*

Frankie shared that there are specific strategies that they apply to working with children and young people in order to protect their own wellbeing. This is likely to be in response to their previous experience of burnout and the need to manage the emotional impact of their workload proactively to prevent this from occurring again. This experience appeared to make Frankie overtly aware of the signs of this happening and how strategies of support are important to manage this risk. Frankie stressed that talking with the right person was a positive strategy of support, but that everyone has different ways of handling difficult emotions. They noted that the Educational Psychology team are involved in staff support at their setting and that this is important for staff to 'offload'. Frankie felt that empathy is a large part of offering emotional support, noting that the person they are speaking to does not need to 'have the answers' but simply offers connection. It was also noted that this support is best coming from someone who knows the school, perhaps emphasising that the connection between teacher and the person who offers them support needs to be based on authentic relationship principles.

### **Current Context**

*"[school setting] paid for two psychodynamic therapists, and I was like how, how the hell do you afford that?"*

*"we've got, you know we have got...less than no money"*

*"services have been cut schools have taken on the brunt but schools haven't, schools support systems haven't risen up to actually...cope with that in terms of like... the staff have stepped up, but the actual system itself hasn't stepped up to support the staff who've stepped up, does that make sense?"*

*"so yeah, so basically ..... we need more support, we haven't got it".*

*"it's just that support but again you know that, that, that's time...Time is money, you haven't got the money, we definitely haven't got time"*

*“increasingly we are becoming social workers... [colleague name] is effectively a social worker, [colleague name] is effectively a social worker and they’re dealing with significant problems on a daily basis”.*

During the interview, Frankie used the current context of their professional working environment to evidence the increasing difficulties they believed the teaching profession were facing. This was often in relation to the resources available to schools impacting upon the support that staff were able to offer, and access. Frankie considered time as a resource as equally as finances and explained that increasing pressure on school responsibility and expectations regarding safeguarding was impacting upon the wellbeing of staff. Wider services being less available to offer support was discussed as meaning that increasingly, Frankie feels that the teaching role is becoming more like social working. Frankie reflected that often the support available to the profession was dictated to by the funding available to schools and that this is not necessarily always the priority.

### **Reflecting on Frankie’s story**

In summary, Frankie discussed the importance of knowing young people that they work with well and forming relationships that can help guide professional responses to individual needs. It was noted that frequent exposure to these relationships and an increase in knowledge regarding individual circumstance can lead to a sense that safeguarding referrals are appropriate. In the current climate these feelings may not be evidence enough to warrant outside agency involvement, regardless of an accumulation of perhaps ‘low level’ events. The consistent need to connect and build relationships with young people where there is potentially a level of concern was discussed by Frankie as impacting upon them emotionally. Eventually this exposure led Frankie to feel ‘dull’ to the emotion of connection. Frankie raised the benefits of team relationships when approaching this level of work and highlighted the need to remain aware of others’ wellbeing as a priority. Frankie noted that the current climate they were working in was likely to be directly impacting upon staff wellbeing, as funding restrictions reduce support and time available for prioritising this as well as an increasing expectation on school staff taking on wider responsibilities which might typically be expected to be managed by an outside agency such as Social Care.

### 4.2.3 Rowan

Rowan is an established member of staff within their school and has over 15 years' experience working in the Local Authority. They have recently reduced their role at school to focus solely on supporting the social emotional mental health of pupils at their setting.



### Relationships with Young People

*“that is just time...they have to really feel that it’s going to be okay...it will be several sessions that you could actually build that trust”*

*“whatever the-the reasons are, it always come out in their behaviour.”*

*“building that relationship first...that they can trust and is constant, that doesn’t mean you can always be this all softy person but it’s, they know those boundaries...”*

*“but I had about four sessions with [them] and now I just... [they’re] in-in one of my clubs and I just...  
‘everything alright? Any worries? No-No’. And big smiley face.”*

Rowan shared during the interview that to work with young people who were exposed to domestic abuse at home a relationship had to first be established. They noted that this was likely to happen over time and that this was essential to build trust. Rowan talked about the importance of understanding children and young people’s behaviours as communication. It felt that they believed the way they approached challenging behaviour could continue to strengthen relationships, and that boundaries were necessary to support young people effectively, as their role required.

### **Strategies for Support**

*“we have our policies around that and our strategies here, um... which are very successful”.*

*“with the different training now, because the [specific approach] was very airy-fairy, I did like [specific approach] but it was very aaahhh. Now with [LA specific approach] the format is slightly different is that you’re... bit more direct... having the confidence to say that, has brought a lot more out.”*

*“name [finger click] the emotion. [Deep breath] Um... kind of that way the children uh... are mooore able to talk...which I feel so much happier with”*

Rowan expressed throughout the interview that the practical strategies they used for supporting young who were exposed to domestic abuse were key to managing any professional worries that they may have for young people. They discussed several different approaches which they found comfort in when using and felt these to be successful. Rowan was able to share their different experiences of alternative approaches to demonstrate how the right approach increases confidence in working with young people, perhaps as a result of increase in disclosures to evidence any concerns they may have when making referrals to wider services (further discussed in the section ‘Emotional Impact’). Strategies such as supporting young people’s emotional literacy were recognised as being helpful in this aspect too, with Rowan noting that the more able to talk the young people were, the ‘happier’ they felt. Rowan also shared that focussing on their setting’s clear, practical policies was a good method of maintaining successful outcomes.

## Emotional Impact

*"sometimes you get a sense, if you want to talk particularly about domestic violence, sometimes they just can't help it, it does come out".*

*when you know you just [clicking their fingers] ooh what i... you know, I'm... something ...that's quite hard to carry with you"*

*"when [laughs] 's not actually that thing [loud and statemented] 'oh I saw a bruise'. Just say gosh, I get this feeling that, that something's...going on"*

*"Saying there's something...is just not right...but I cant tell you because they haven't told me....But that doesn't still mean that it's not there and it hasn't happened"*

*"the impact on myself though sometimes I...I do sometimes feel very tired...Very tired".*

Rowan discussed the notion that often they felt that a young person may be exposed to domestic abuse at home, or other concerns, but that there was not always definitive evidence that could accompany this feeling. There was a moment where it seemed that Rowan felt it likely that young people might try to keep this information to themselves and so this contributed to their understanding of needing to build a trusting relationship with young people to be able to offer them wider support through referrals to services such as Social Care. Rowan noted that often evidence could not be physically seen, and that a feeling did not mean that the concern was not just as real. It was shared that this was hard to manage to carry emotionally as a professional and that this holding of information did affect them.

## Protecting Wellbeing

*"obviously for us as well, we have a big-big thing of kee... th... our main thing is keeping everyone safe."*

*"I wouldn't say any names but I'd just go and let off steam."*

*"I think, as long as we feel we've tried and we've done our best..."*

*"we can do lots... But um... if all of that is...met...but we still don't feel very happy...Then, we have to know we've done our best. ...because otherwise that, that is not good for our own mental health"*

*"my role has completely changed...I was still doing the both jobs..."*

*since the beginning of the year...I have done purely the emotional well-being of the school...But now the impact...is quite big"*

During the interview Rowan shared that it was important that staff protect their wellbeing as part of the current working environment, in order to continue to manage the responsibility of supporting young people emotionally. Keeping everyone safe, not just young people was important. Rowan discussed that following procedures for referrals was helpful in feeling as if they were 'doing something', but that when the outcomes of these referrals did not help the emotional concern dissipate then the team 'have to' focus on knowing that they have tried as hard as they can, and this has to be enough. This feels like a self-protective strategy. Rowan talked about this aspect of their experience using the term 'we', which felt this indicated that concern was shared between team members and working together in these matters was important for Rowan; a strategy for supporting their own wellbeing which will be discussed in more detail in the below theme 'Relationships with Colleagues'. Rowan shared that their role had reduced to focus on solely supporting emotional wellbeing in the school but reflected that by increasing their experience in this area, the impact on their own emotional wellbeing increased also.

### **Relationships with Colleagues**

*"I feel confident enough and have a very good relationship...with um... [colleague name] to say, 'No I need to talk to you now'."*

*"they're on my side... If you see what I mean. They're they to say, 'oh god... you know, poor you"*

*"if anything is really bugging us that we need to talk and whoever you feel happy to talk with... We're...we-we-we're quite lucky yeah. We have a really good team".*

*"the EP said uh, 'I just... I do not know how you are doing this' or 'I don't know how you're managing'...You know, 'how often do you get to talk to people' and actually I wasn't... and so that's why the change happened."*

Rowan expressed that a key part of managing the emotional impact of working with young people exposed to domestic abuse was having trusting relationships with colleagues. They shared that a team approach to recognising when people needed support was important and that having confidence in sharing concerns or worries with senior leaders was vital for their own piece of mind.

Rowan shared that in the past they had been finding their roles challenging and having a positive relationship with the setting's Educational Psychologist had meant that this changed for them. It felt that this instance had further established the sense of trust Rowan felt between themselves and senior leadership as once this concern had been raised, change had taken place. Rowan noted that talking with someone who is felt to be on the same 'side' was important and that empathy was a key factor in making talking with a trusted someone feel helpful.

### **Current Context**

*"Because we can help and help and help and help, put everything we can in place for the day and then they have to go home...I'm not saying it's... it's um, useless... But it makes it [whispers] very much harder."*

*"if you could put every child, sort of, that's seeing anything but it's... it doesn't... there isn't enough time."*

*"it's not just the time that the teacher is taken out of class...then obviously that has to be covered. It's also... we have to buy into you now as well".*

*"I've had all the training in this but also.....this kind of training is a lot and a lot more expensive...and I've been doing it for so long that I'm probably well practised"*

Rowan discussed that there were limits to what the school could offer in supporting young people and that this felt particularly difficult at times. There was the sense that wider support offered to families was important to act as continuity for the young people Rowan was working with but that this was not always readily available. Rowan appeared to feel that the numbers of young people within their setting that were likely to be exposed to domestic abuse were significantly higher than the resource of time would allow to be supported. They continued the reflection that resource restrictions were impacting on the support that could be accessed on a wider level for young people and staff such as needing to purchase services such as Educational Psychologists time. Rowan noted that staff are a valuable resource and training is an investment which needs to be utilised once achieved, Potentially this was a reflection regarding their recent role change needing to focus on wellbeing in school as a priority, not just because the role was likely to be a good 'fit' for their own wellbeing, but because they had accessed training that was costly and could not afford to be wasted.

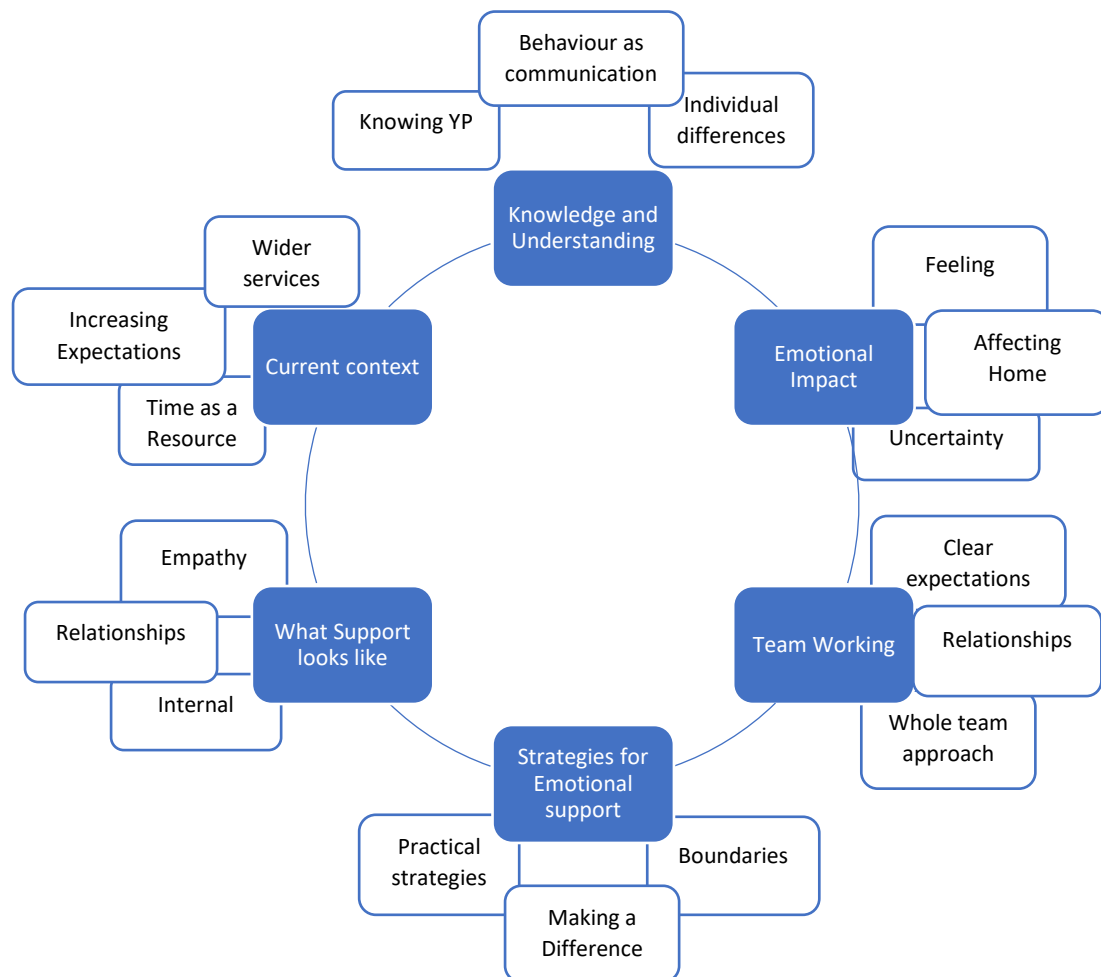
### **Reflecting on Rowan's story**

In summary, Rowan put great emphasis on the importance of trust and connection when working with young people to be able to understand their needs and respond appropriately. There was a recognition that focussing on practical strategies to support young people can be an effective way of managing emotional concern possibly linking to the feeling of doing 'something' to help. Rowan also focussed on strategies that might be able to equip a young person in the future to talk more openly about areas of concern. This might increase the evidence available to Rowan (and future professionals working with young people) to make safeguarding referrals to Social Care increasingly evidential. Rowan valued the trust they had with their team and reflected that this was essential to their wellbeing, noting this was increasingly important as their recent role change had increased the emotional impact they experienced. Rowan appeared to be very happy within their current team and reflections on previous experiences appeared to bolster this feeling: believing themselves and the team they worked with to be 'lucky'.



#### 4.2.4 Riley

Riley recently qualified as a teacher. They worked within their setting as a support member of staff prior to qualification. Their current role is the first qualified position they have held.



#### Knowledge and Understanding

*"I guess it's a case of... sometimes their behaviours are almost sort o' e-e-explained...by what they've witnessed"*

*"this child shows incredible resilience and you, it... you would never have known."*

*"then we just need to-to softly say that it's okay to be angry but it's not okay to-to-to lash out...or it's not okay to-to rip your work up, or it's not okay to-to throw a chair."*

*"So we often use this room, or we'll use outside because it's-it's an enc... safe enclosed space. Or, certain children have certain places that they'll go to"*

*"And we do know them very well...we're with them six a day, sometimes seven hours a day."*

Riley frequently focussed on their wider professional knowledge and understanding of children and the theory behind how best to support them when talking with me. They reflected on the importance of understanding behaviour as communication and noted that a 'good' teacher will not consider children as 'naughty'. Riley emphasised the importance of knowing children and young people well, reflecting that in one case they had been informed a young person was exposed to domestic abuse at home, but that they had not displayed anything that would be considered a cause for concern typically. They upheld that adaptations need to be made to supporting young people and that whilst behaviour is communication it is important to keep them safe. Riley stressed that their understanding was that school should be a safe space and that they believed their setting was able to ensure this, reflecting that often school staff are the ones who know the children well and offer effective support as a result of this.

### **Emotional impact**

*"I guess if it's... iffff... if... if there's that feeling where it's repeated continually, maybe weekly or daily...and that we-we're concerned, then we... I mean I guess we just follow our school procedures"*

*"we'd regularly say like we-we'll go to bed and we'll lie on our pillow and think-think about that child"*

*"you might go home 'n not have said it to anyone...at the dinner table, or you lie in bed and you think, actually no that-that's playing on my mind...and then... share it the next day."*

*"there's one... one little [yp] who on a Friday, or at a ha... before half-term [they] actually says, 'I want to come home with you'... [their] home life isn't a safe place...we think, wh...h... why, why can't we just take [them] home this once."*

*"if there's 30 children in the class there's bound to be more that we're not aware of"*

Riley shared that they experienced emotional impact when working with children who are likely to be exposed to domestic abuse at home. This was evidenced by the reflections that they often worried at home about the young people they work with. It seemed that these worries did not need to be based on factual concern, and that feeling the worry was based on the understanding of safeguarding signs to note. Riley appeared to judge how serious the feeling of concern was based on whether the thoughts were 'playing' on their mind after school. This experience might then warrant Riley to take further action by reporting to evidence a possible safeguarding referral. Riley also noted that an accumulation of feelings where a behaviour caused repeated concern would warrant sharing more widely. They also noted that when there is definite evidence of concern for young people the instinct to protect feels much harder, but that there is also suspicion that others in their care are likely to be exposed to this phenomenon too.

### **Team working**

*"I think i-in the immediate case it's just keeping them safe ...keeping myself safe, keeping the school safe."*

*"we'll just follow our procedures and log it and record it."*

*"we share amongst... so even though, like I might work in one class, I will be on the playground with all the children..."*

*"we will follow the procedures but then there's also the staff member who's your friend... Who you might go to to just have a chat with"*

*"And there are opportunities to say um...'I need a break'...and...that is listened to."*

Riley appeared to take great comfort from working within the team at their setting. There was a clear emphasis on the clarity of practical procedures to follow when they felt safeguarding concern for young people they worked with, which they explained was down to positive communication. There was a sense of understanding that these procedures protected the staff as equally as the young people they worked with. Riley emphasised the importance of a whole team approach as young people requiring support would not only interact with a select few staff members during their time at school. The shared responsibility of working with these young people appeared to enable Riley to place a deep value in positive relationships between team members through shared

experience. Riley described that they felt listened to by senior leaders and friendships have been formed through close team working.

### **Strategies for Emotional support**

*"I work with... very tricky children. Um but it hasn't gotten me down...Because, so I think, I think whatever we're doing there must be something right".*

*"yeah I guess it's offloading, it's, it's making [them] aware of what I go through during a day... that w-we shouldn't be complaining about anything."*

*"we'll know that actually it's not our place to deal with things outside of school...It's a fine line. It's good to know...but we can't get involved... it's important to know if there's going to be an impact on the child..."*

*"an EP came in and gave a whole school training...Emotion coaching...but that's just invaluable...it's completely transferrable"*

Throughout the interview, Riley discussed possible strategies for support that they were applying to manage the emotional impact that working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse may have. They recognised that despite a 'tricky' class they were not feeling too down and appeared to attribute this to the belief that as a team they *"must be doing something right"*. They noted that there were limits to the support that they were able to offer, despite knowing things that may be difficult for some young people at times. It seemed that reminding themselves of these boundaries enabled Riley a sense of 'shutting off'. They also noted specific practical strategies which had been offered from the school's EP which were transferrable to a range of young people which were helpful. Focussing on practical strategies where Riley felt they were making a difference to young people seemed to offer them some protection from taking worries home.

### **What Support looks like**

*"For me personally it's... it's probably just...sharing ...talking about it."*

*"I don't expect someone to say, 'alright, okay, well, would you like to come out of that class and not work with that [yp]?' I don't expect a fix, just enough... just an acknowledgement".*

*"You just get like a...a nod from someone that yeah, yeah that...that was hard...And that's enough probably"*

*"it's better to...to talk to someone who ... can empathise, i.e. someone who understands the...the intricate situation that might have happened."*

*"I think for me talking to a colleague might be better than talking to a professional"*

Riley discussed explicitly what they felt effective support for them should look like throughout the interview. This seemed to be linked to their positive experiences of working in a team, but they did not limit their reflections on this to parts of the interview which focussed on team context alone. Riley noted that they felt that, for them, support would likely to work best if it was coming from an internal source. It felt that this was likely to be as a result of the importance Riley placed on shared experience, and the person offering support 'understanding' the same contexts as them. Riley focussed on the importance of empathy when connecting with someone, and there seemed to be an expectation that outside professionals focus on advice over listening.

### **Current context**

*"you need to spend ten minutes or 20 minutes...[so they are] actually in a place where they're ready to learn"*

*"most of the time we will try and support those vulnerable children because we know... [deep breath] they need the more emotional support than the other 29"*

*"the [outside professional] who came in h-had only that hour or half an hour to work with the [yp] Um and then [they] would leave and we were left, kind of, picking up the... what...whatever, you know"*

*"it's not money or confidentiality, it's...it's...it's um...uh ... government curriculum ...expectations...we feel that there's some children who we would just love to...to nurture".*

Riley noted that time as a resource was a challenge when offering young people support within the current context of expectations on teachers. They shared that in order for children to be in the right place to learn after experiencing distress, time needed to be spent in helping them regulate, which puts pressure on their capacity to 'educate' the remainder of the class. Riley also shared that when

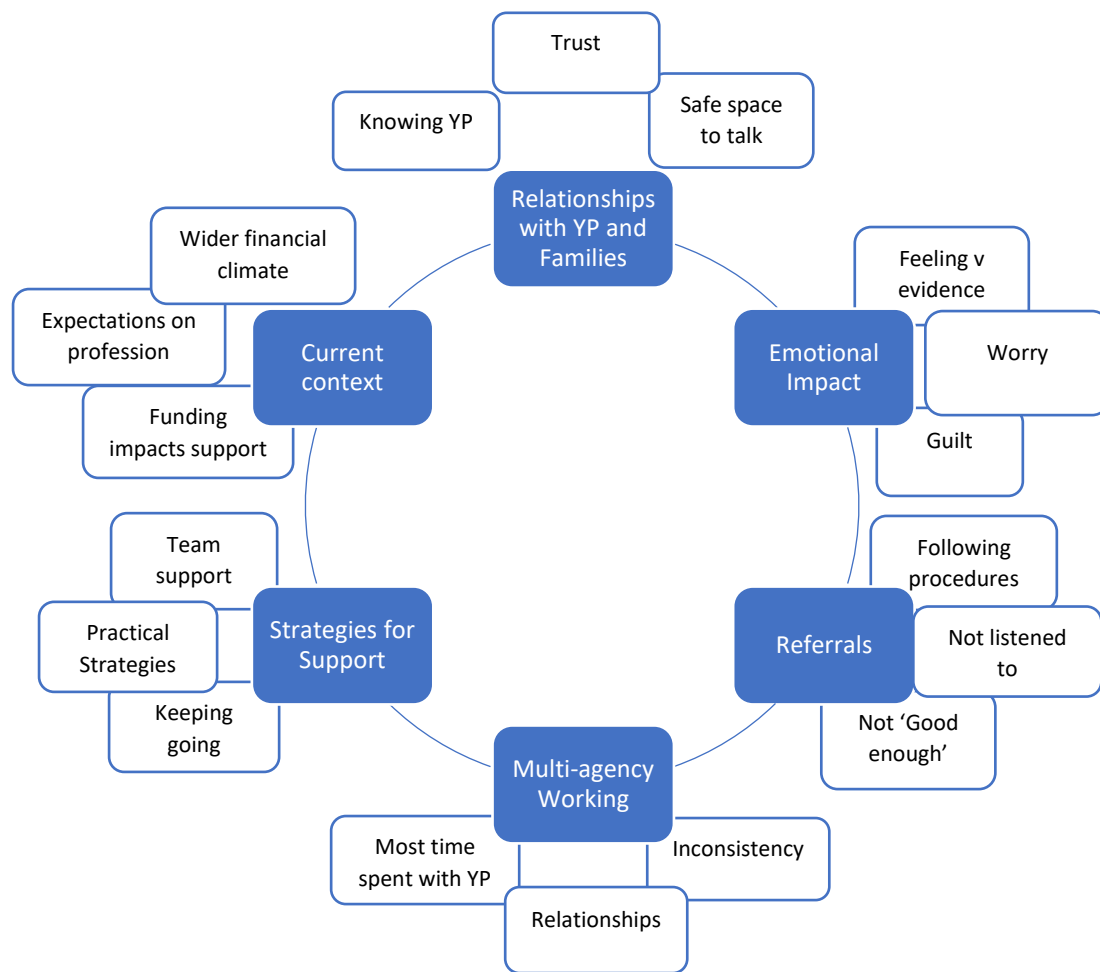
outside professionals offered therapeutic interventions in school for short periods of time, the young person often required increased support from school staff as they sometimes were unable to process effectively during the allocated time. Riley lamented that for some young people the best support they could offer would be focussing on a whole child approach to education but that curriculum expectations limited the opportunity to nurture.

### **Reflecting on Riley's story**

As a recently qualified teacher Riley appeared to focus very much on the practical application of knowledge and skills throughout their practice during the interview. This focus appeared to act as a strategy of support in managing the emotional impact that they experienced when working with young people exposed to domestic abuse. However, despite these protective strategies, Riley reflected that they worry at home about the young people they work with and was explicit about what they felt support for them would need to look like.

#### 4.2.5 Bobby

Bobby is an experienced teacher who has multiple roles as part of the Senior Leadership Team of their setting. They have over 15 years of experience across several Local Authorities, have worked in different settings within the Local Authority where this study takes place and have worked in their current setting for a notable period.



#### Relationships with Children Young People, Families & Community

*“we can’t...support children if we can’t support the parents”*

*“two mums today have disclosed to me about domestic abuse just today...”*

*“You don’t wanna break the relationships down”.*

*“we spend more time with the child than anyone else does”*

*“I go through some o’ the children that I’m concerned about and you look ‘n you think right okay, their attendance is really low their lates really high, or, their attendance is 100%....an’ you look ‘n you think, I’ve seen you poorly”*

Bobby stressed the importance of relationships throughout the interview when discussing how best to support young people who are exposed to domestic abuse at home. Significantly, Bobby emphasised the importance of relationships with parents and families, noting that by creating a safe space to talk, parents were able to share experiences which enabled the school to really tailor the support available to them. Bobby noted that trust was essential in shaping these supportive relationships and at times this might be particularly difficult to manage when safeguarding referrals needed to be made. They shared that by knowing their young people really well they felt they were able to recognise key behavioural concerns such as perfect attendance when there had definitely been days when young people were ill enough to take a days rest.

### **Emotional Impact**

*“there’s some children that we just have a gut feeling about and that we know that there’s something there and there’s not enough...”*

*“we know what’s going on... that’s not uncommon... you’re waiting for the big thing to happen”*

*“we can get something... we can get something done now.”*

*“we are worried about it and then when you get that, it’s not nice... it’s not a nice feeling”*

*“and I was absolutely fumin’ because it is a thing...it’s enough for me to worry.”*

*“that’s, um ...absolutely heart-breaking”*

Bobby was clear about the emotional response they experienced in working with children and young people where exposure to domestic abuse is felt to be a concern, and extended reflections at times to include a wide range of safeguarding concerns. Bobby felt that often their experience in safeguarding guided them to report concerns that were dismissed by others who believed these to not be evidential enough or warrant involvement. Bobby shared that these moments made them



feel anger at not being able to access the support that they felt the young person needed (further discussions on this can be found in the theme 'Multi-agency Working' below). Bobby noted that there was often a feeling that something was not right, which the researcher felt was likely to be linked to Bobby's practice based experience, and that they recognised that there needs to be a build-up of evidence for referrals to meet the threshold for wider service involvement. At times Bobby seemed to express a level of guilt when a feeling of concern was found to be fact. They felt relief this information would enable further action, noting that waiting for suspicions to be confirmed was not a nice feeling.

## Referrals

*"we know there's enough but it's not enough for criteria"*

*"we've reported something and when we've phoned, you feel im... like th... you're... you're belittled...like 'oh...well, that's not really a thing'...We're doin' this all day, every day, so we do know what...a thing is."*

*"you cant do anythin' about that...when I phoned to deal with regularly... it's like 'well yeah, there's nothin' there'... there's nothin' you can do."*

*"[yp] lived experiences are... But it's not enough to... meet any criteria, or to get a social worker involved"*

Bobby noted throughout the interview that the reality of the referral process in their current working context was challenging, emotionally and professionally. They shared that at times the accumulation of evidence of concern was felt to be strong enough to warrant a safeguarding referral but that often these may still not meet criteria for Social Care involvement. It felt that this reflection was emotionally difficult for Bobby, perhaps due to their experiences of working in this area where in the past the evidence gathered would have met the threshold for wider support for these young people. Bobby appeared to find the notion that there was nothing that could be done challenging. They shared that they have experienced being told by other professionals that their concern was unfounded. It appeared that Bobby feels deeply affected by this; believing they are the professional who knows these young people best and should therefore be listened to.

## Multi-agency Working

*“when we’re scoring on signs of safety, we’re nearly always the lowest...and that’s because we spend more time with the child than anyone else does”*

*“Four times so far...four social workers”.*

*“we do find it does depend on who’s doin’ the assessments and things...we’ve got some social workers that come in and you’re like, ‘oh thank goodness it’s that one!’”*

*“we’ll refer and then you might get a family support worker in for a bit, an’ then that’ll drop off”*

*“sometimes you phone [LA specific service] for, y’know, just a bit of advice... and they’re brilliant...It does depend who you get”*

*“their good enough might be different to our good enough”*

Bobby discussed the concept of Multi-agency working as being important to providing young people with the right support but that this came with challenges. They noted that during multi-agency child protection meetings they were often the professionals to have the lowest scores regarding their belief that the young person in question was safe. It appeared that Bobby felt this position was not always respected by other professionals and found this hard as they were the profession that had the most regular contact with the individual. Bobby also raised the concept of being ‘good enough’ as subjective, appearing to feel that others positions on what constitutes as ‘good enough’ was not their understanding of the term for the young people they support.

Bobby expressed that they experienced inconsistency with staffing of wider agencies such as social care and that this was not conducive to effective working. The researcher felt that Bobby’s experiences of working effectively with multi-agency workers hinged on whether a positive working relationship had been formed between them, and that examples such as changes in social workers allocated to a case could impact on building these relationships. Bobby expressed that there were times of relief when specific individuals were involved as they believed this would be beneficial for the young person. This appeared to be linked with previous experiences of working with these professionals. Bobby also noted that multi-agency workers can offer beneficial advice when sought and that there are services which offer positive support.

## Strategies for support

*"Think the unthinkable question, the unquestionable... yep"*

*"We keep on it... we are like dogs gnawing bones y'know, we don't let it go...just because we've been told that"*

*"we've got really good TAs and s... teachers here that will monitor it too...build up a good chronology"*

*"we both will be in tears at times..*

*I'll have a moment and [colleague name] will have a moment...we do bounce off each other, we do use each other a lot"*

*"we can help with the simple things. So, another mum came in this morning, again, domestic... domestic abuse. He's left, she's got no money, she's totally broke...[yp] got no school shoes... that to her was such a worry... [colleague name] is finding a pair of shoes for them"*

*"you can do all of those things and that's... that does make you feel better that you can help,...and they'll come to you and that's good".*

Throughout the interview, Bobby discussed several strategies for support they used. These were not only focussing on practical support for children and young people. Bobby expressed that in order to manage the emotional impact of working with young people believed to be exposed to domestic abuse at home they used strategies such as team working and self-protective approaches. One of the approaches that Bobby noted was continuing to follow safeguarding procedures and training (quoting the expectation offered by training providers) by reporting concerns despite feeling these were not always listened to. They appeared to protect themselves from emotional impact by having confidence in this practice and the belief that this would enable wider support for young people eventually. Bobby appeared to put deep value in team support, and discussed supportive relationships with key team members, built on shared experiences of the emotional impact of the work. Wider team members were recognised as being vital to build up pictures of young people to contribute to evidencing referrals. Bobby seemed to gain relief from the emotional effects of working with this phenomenon by being able to feel useful by offering practical support to families in need; both in being their confidant and in providing practical resources such as school uniform when needed.

## **Current context**

*“it is hard and we are all getting more ‘n more roles aren’t we...We were just teachers at one point”*

*“Funding was no object we’d have our own EP our own social worker...our own play therapist”*

*“there’s definitely more around that time when money’s tight...there’s all those family worries...you definitely notice then that that’s when they sort o’ come out”*

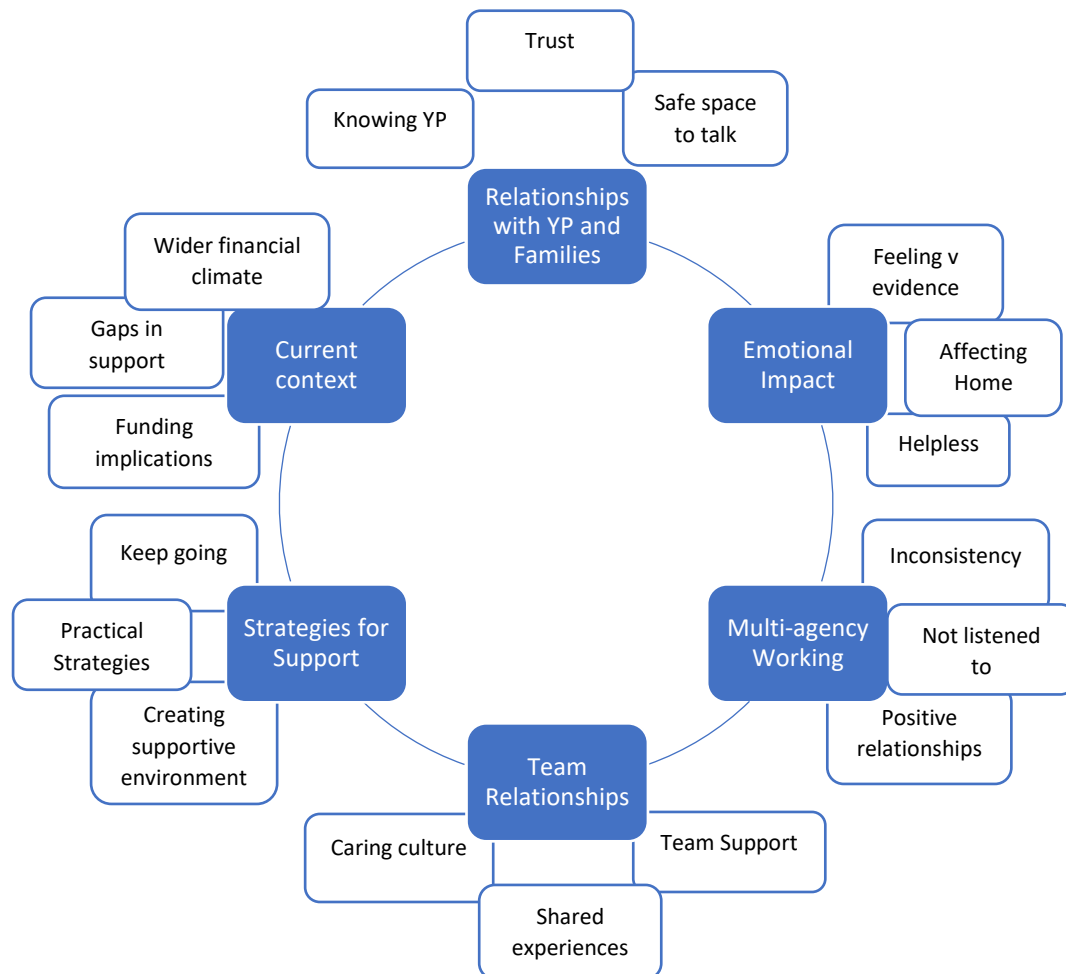
Bobby expressed that the expectation on their profession, and other multi-agency workers such as EPs, were increasing regarding what they were now considered responsible for. It felt that Bobby’s experience led them to reflect that a teacher’s main responsibility at one point was academic education and this was no longer the case. They lamented that funding limited their capacity to offer as much support as all the young people in their care would benefit from. The researcher felt this evidenced Bobby’s hope to offer the best possible outcomes for all, rather than the ‘good enough’ expectation discussed in Multi-agency Working. Bobby also noted that experience had led them to note that there were certain wider familial stressors that might lead to increasing experiences of domestic abuse such as financial problems. They reflected that these appeared to be affecting the wider community.

## **Reflecting on Bobby’s Story**

Bobby felt committed and passionate about the responsibility of supporting the young people they worked with who they believed were exposed to domestic abuse, as well as wider safeguarding concerns. They discussed the emotional impact of this as being real, and this appeared to be exacerbated by the limitations of support available to them from referral criteria thresholds. This seemed directly linked to the feeling of not being listened to at times by other professionals, feeling conviction that they know young people best, as they spend the most time together. Effective Multi-agency working appeared to be linked to the formation of positive working relationships with professionals and this could be hindered by inconsistency in staff allocated to cases. Bobby appeared to take comfort in applying practical strategies when working with families and sharing the emotional impact of the work with like-minded team members. Bobby reflected on the current context of the working environment by expressing the belief that the expectations on their profession, and others were expanding and that funding limitations restricted the support available to young people.

#### 4.2.6 Charlie

Charlie is a member of the Senior Leadership Team in the school where they work. They have over 10 years experience of teaching and have managed multiple roles of responsibility during this time. They have worked in several settings across the Local Authority and considers themselves a fairly new member of the team in their current setting.



#### Relationships with Children Young People & Families

*"I think children... most children can name an adult that they will talk to in school...if they were worried...they've said that"*

*"I think also, as well as knowing the children the best, like saying about w... we've also worked really closely with some parents"*

*“mum disclosed something to me on the phone...and it kind of explains a little bit of everything...I’m the person that she trusted”*

*“I’m trying to say it in a way that is gonna keep my relationship with mum. I do probably word things in a different way but...that’s who I’ve got to have that relationship with”*

Charlie emphasised that supporting young people and their families was a crucial aspect of working with the phenomenon of domestic abuse. They stressed the importance of trust in managing this, linking to the belief that if families felt safe with Charlie and their wider school team, they were more likely to share information which could help inform interventions intended to offer support. There was a sense that maintaining this relationship was important to Charlie, because they were the professional that had the most contact with families. It felt that at times the balance between managing safeguarding concerns, maintaining positive relationships with families and effective working with multi-agency professionals was problematic. Charlie appeared to demonstrate pride that children in their school identified staff as people that they could talk to.

### **Emotional Impact**

*“sometimes, which is even worse, is that you’re really pleased when something does come out, because...because then you know that we can get some support in place”*

*“sometimes just waiting for the child to say... you’re waiting...and that’s awful”*

*“when we have had parents who’ve come and disclosed...you feel like you are doing a good job... it’s a poison chalice because you take that then with you”*

*“Feel helpless and it...it...it does keep you awake at night...you wake up or, it just plays on your mind and something doesn’t sit right”*

*“you know something isn’t right and we’re tied”*

*“just make you feel like you’re ridiculous for phoning for that... I’ve been in tears of rage...just frustration...but what are you sending that person home to now?”*

Charlie discussed throughout the interview the emotional impact that they experienced when working with young people who they felt were exposed to domestic abuse. They appeared to

express a level of guilt at feeling pleased when the evidence they needed for safeguarding referrals came to light. This seemed to be linked to the notion of waiting for the evidence to be present. Charlie frequently referred to the feeling that something was concerning but that this may not act as evidence to refer to Social Care and that they were 'tied' without such. It appeared that even when there was evidence to refer, through the positive trust of parental disclosure, this caused conflicting emotions for Charlie. It seemed that that event was both reassuring meaning Charlie had done a 'good job', and hard to manage, possibly through the sharing of that experience prompting empathetic emotional connection. Charlie was clear that worrying about young people is something that is not isolated to within school and was felt at home too. They also expressed frustration at experiences of raising concern and not being heard increasing their worry for the lived experience of the young person in question. This aspect of Charlie's experiencing is further discussed in the following theme 'Multi-agency Working'

### **Multi-agency Working**

*"in a core group so you...you hear things in other areas...well that then lowers my score because actually...that makes it more of a concern"*

*"we're not always able to have that information...so we don't always know some of the medical stuff, for example...We only really know what the parents tell us and sometimes that's honest and sometimes that's not"*

*"I know that there's a pattern...of things. And when there's a change in social worker, or a change in professional and you' like hmm... and th... it starts again"*

*"so when we phone [LA specific service] or something and they go... oh no, well you need to phone the parent, it's like, no... I would've done. If I thought that, that was what's needed"*

*"it's really frustrating when you're not listened to when you phone up and say something's not right"*

*"I've worked with [EP name] so I was really pleased because... she knows that...she says 'I know you wouldn't be phoning...and when [colleague name] was on the behaviour support team 'yep if you've made a referral I'll get 'em straight away, because I know you don't make a referral lightly"*

Charlie reflected that a large aspect of working with young people exposed to domestic abuse involved Multi-agency working and discussed issues with this throughout the interview. They noted that they felt that they often held more concerns for young people than wider agency workers. This

seemed to be linked to Charlie feeling they had the best understanding of the young people due to the length of time spent together. They also reflected that they were often the most consistent professional working with the young people and noted that there were patterns of behaviour in families when changes to wider agency workers such as Social Workers took place. This seemed to be linked to Charlie feeling that the support needed for young people was often delayed due to other professional staff changes. Charlie noted that whilst they were proactive in sharing information to wider agencies, and felt judged at times because of this, the privilege to important information was not always returned to them, relying on the good faith that parents were sharing honestly. Charlie stressed that when there were positive relationships formed with wider professionals such as EPs, these were helpful in providing wider advice and reassurance.

### **Team Relationships**

*“Int: how would you manage that... that kind of emotional load for you guys?”*

*Ch: Each other [laughs]...Completely each other”*

*“one of us is generally a good cop....and the other one is the one who comes... gives the harder news sometimes”*

*“we’re really lucky that, kind of, we’ve got this room...it’s a bit of a... haha... a ranting room”*

*“you know, it’s one of those like...really hard day...So tends to be that really...Each other”*

*“I think everyone’s quite nurturing here as well”*

Charlie emphasised the importance of team relationships as a part of their Strategies for Support, and the researcher felt that whilst team support sat as a part of the theme to be further discussed below, Charlie appeared to value this as a distinct theme that should be respected. They presented that the support of the team was primarily how they were able to manage their working responsibilities and the emotional impact that they caused, noting a specific colleague. This relationship appeared to be based on sharing the experiences, and possible frustrations, of their working context. Charlie noted that they could share the responsibility in managing difficult conversations together which they felt to be working well to maintain positive relationships with families. Wider team members were noted for nurturing qualities that appeared to align with Charlie’s own approaches. Charlie specifically noted that as a team they were all able to access a safe space to offload and share, and that this was encouraged and supported by their headteacher.



## Strategies for Support

*“you know, when we have had parents who’ve come and disclosed...you feel like you are doing a good job”*

*“the fact that parents have come in ‘n recognise that there are people in school...that they don’t have to tell but do tell”*

*“We’re like a... a dog with a bone...if I could I would check it all”*

*“like a food bank voucher... you know which we’ve got”*

*“I think [LA specific training] is massively helpful...because that gives us some real strategies”*

*“it’s like, informal supervision isn’t it?... But it’s formal enough...it’s informal but it’s formal because of our roles...but it’s informal coz you don’t have to be filling a form”*

Charlie discussed the importance of strategies of support throughout the interview. They appeared to be able to manage the emotional impact of their role by focussing on the application of both practical strategies and self-protective strategies such as keeping going and believing in what they were doing was the right thing. One of these strategies was continuing to build evidence for referrals for young people where the feeling of concern would not abate. Charlie noted that practical strategies offered through specific training were found to be helpful. It seemed that Charlie’s strategies were deemed to be helpful if they contributed to their feeling that they were offering effective support for young people and their families. Practical resources such as food bank vouchers would contribute to this sense of being able to offer wider support. Charlie noted that supervision was important and that they felt they received an informal version of this at times through the relationships with colleagues that have been discussed in the theme ‘Team Relationships’.

## Current context

*“there’s also a gap between like family support and social care. So because that’s all got to be voluntary...there’s nothing in between and they don’t need a social worker”*

*“in a school like ours, where actually we could probably take up all of your [EP] time from an educational point...We can also equally take up all of your time with children who are experiencing that sort of thing”*

*“the EP service helping, yes probably really good but I also think...in terms of all your allocated hours...a catchment like ours we could put you up for a year’s worth of supervision-y type stuff”*

*“I think this year is the year... we’ve had more disclosures...whether that’s coincidence or whether it’s because... change in economic climate which has bought other things to the fore...”*

Charlie discussed that the current context of the environment they work in impacts upon the support that they are able to seek or offer. They noted that there were some gaps for young people where support available required parental consent, and often these cases were not at the level to be considered for access to a social worker. There was also the reflection that the EP support available is helpful but that this is restricted to the school financing the time of the service. Charlie noted that the level of need in their school was such that they could likely warrant full time involvement for both young people exposed to domestic abuse and the supervision of the staff team. Charlie also seemed to consider the wider financial climate as potentially impacting upon their feeling that there had been an increase in disclosures received as a school.

### **Reflecting on Charlie’s story**

Charlie appeared to be deeply connected to the importance of supporting children and families within their school and valued the trust they placed in them. These relationships seemed to impact on the emotional responses to safeguarding concerns, particularly when Charlie experienced ‘feeling’ something was not right and felt, or was told by others, they were unable to access wider support for young people. Charlie placed a deep value in the relationships they had with colleagues and it felt that the shared experiences of the team enabled opportunities to access informal supervision together. This was noted as being encouraged by Charlie’s headteacher. Practical strategies that seemed to enable Charlie to feel helpful and offer effective support were recognised as was the advice and support of specific multi-agency professionals where a positive relationship had been established. Charlie reflected on the issue of the current context impacting upon both the support that they were able to access and the possible increase in challenging circumstances for their families at school.

### 4.3 Overarching Themes

The following section will consider the second level of analysis conducted as part of this research. It focusses on the overarching themes that appeared to be shared in the discussions the participants. Each participant discussed their experiences in their own approach, and the researcher has endeavoured to represent each of the individual participant's thematic models in the previous section to uphold the individuality of these experiences (through their interpretative lens as a researcher). Nevertheless, there are some comparisons to be drawn across the discussions of the participants which the following section will aim to address. The four identified overarching themes to be discussed are Emotional Impact, Strategies for Support, Relationships, and Current Context.

#### Emotional Impact

Without fail, all the participants within this study raised the issue of there being an Emotional Impact to their experiences of working with children and young people where they believe there is an exposure to domestic abuse at home, and at times wider safeguarding concerns. For Quinn, this seemed to be accepted as part of the job *"you just get used to it"*. There seemed to be a general reflection that the participants 'feel' concern for the young people they work with and support, regardless whether they know for certain that they were exposed to domestic abuse at home. Bobby likened this to a 'gut feeling' *"we just have a gut feeling about...we know there's something"*. This feeling or belief was frequently described as being connected with the participant using this to guide them to suspect, or 'know' in Bobby's case, that there were definite concerns for the young people they worked with, regardless whether there was any concrete evidence behind this *"I can't tell you because they haven't told me...but that doesn't mean...it hasn't happened"* as Rowan expressed. Regardless of certainty of exposure, participants expressed 'worrying' about the young people they work with.

The participants discussed the importance of evidencing safeguarding referrals to provide further support for the young people they work with and this responsibility appeared to cause further emotional impact. Participants discussed 'waiting' for evidence, which seemed to further their feeling of worry or concern as Charlie noted *"just waiting for the child to say....that's awful"*. Others, like Frankie, shared that not being able to evidence referrals which they believed were warranted caused further emotional impact in the form of frustration *"there's no tick box for 'I've got a feeling'. So, it is... frustrating"*.

Participants also noted that the impact on them emotionally from working with children and young people where they were concerned for their wellbeing was taken home with them *“we’d regularly say...we’ll lie on our pillow and think about that child”* as shared by Riley.

What was clear from the participant’s accounts was that they all experienced a range of emotions associated when working with children and young people where they believed there was exposure to domestic abuse. Sometimes these feelings were simply described as ‘hard’ or ‘difficult’, others as ‘heart-breaking’. At times there was a clear labelling of the specific emotion felt such as anger or frustration.

### **Strategies for Support**

The participants appeared to place an emphasis on the importance of strategies for support when working with children and young people where they believed there was an exposure to domestic abuse. Strategies shared appeared to fall into two areas of focus: practical strategies to support the young people they worked with and strategies that supported the participants emotionally.

Practical strategies for support discussed included following the safeguarding procedures outlined by school policy but equally informed by the participant’s experiences of safeguarding training, application of support strategies available to the young people they worked with and strategies which could offer families wider support. Participants such as Bobby seemed to take comfort in following the safeguarding training and procedures that they had trained in *“Think the unthinkable question, the unquestionable”*, others such as Rowan, noted the priority of *“keeping everyone safe”* at the heart of their work.

Riley and Rowan discussed specific training that they had received which enabled them to feel confident in offering children they worked with support: *“Emotion Coaching... that’s just invaluable, it’s completely transferrable”* (Riley) and *“with the different training now...the format is slightly different...having the confidence to say that, has brought a lot more out”* (Rowan). Rowan also applied this theme as supporting the young people they worked with to be increasingly confident in using language to express themselves, which may in future offer further concrete evidence for referral criteria. Charlie and Bobby both seemed to share that the practical strategies they offered families to support enabled them to feel that they had helped in some way *“like a food bank voucher”* (Charlie).

This sense of participants feeling ‘helpful’ by using support strategies with young people and families connects the overarching theme to include strategies which support participants emotionally.

Several of the participants of the study reflected that they were consciously applying strategies to combat the emotional impact they experience when working with children and young people. Quinn and Frankie were explicit in the fact that this enabled them to continue working with this level of responsibility with Quinn sharing *"I now have a rule...you've got to be able to rationalise...that's enough"*. Frankie had made professional decisions which they felt protected them from too deeper impact on their wellbeing, by actively avoiding a leadership role in safeguarding. Other's noted that they needed to know that they had 'done enough' or their 'best' to emotionally be able to manage the limits of their responsibility regarding this phenomenon.

The participants frequently discussed connecting with others as part of their strategies for support which will be addressed in further detail in the following theme, 'Relationships: Young People and Colleagues'

### **Relationships: Young People and Colleagues.**

The discussions concerning relationships appeared to follow two distinct threads within the thematic models of individual experiences. Firstly, relationships with young people were discussed by all but did not feel to be a distinct theme for Riley, instead appearing to connect their relationships with young people to their developing knowledge and understanding as a professional. Secondly, themes concerning relationships with colleagues, team members, and other professionals were shared by all, although these all fell under variations of titles in response to the individuality of each interview.

Relationships with young people appeared to be crucial for several participants to feel confident in offering the right support. Participants discussed the importance of 'knowing' young people they worked with, not only to tailor supportive strategies but also to recognise behavioural changes that acted as communication which could serve as evidence towards safeguarding concerns and subsequent referrals, Riley reflected *"We do know them very well...we're with them...sometimes seven hours a day"*. Frequently participants noted safety in the relationship for the young people they worked with, Frankie reflected on the importance of these connections *"they gave me that...clearly meant a lot to them"*. Trust was an element that was noted as being crucial for these relationships, especially with young people as emphasised by Rowan *"Building that relationship...that they can trust and is constant"*.

The participants all reflected on the importance of relationships with the people they worked with, whether these people were referred to as staff, team members or colleagues, the importance of contact with these people was upheld. Much of the focus of discussions regarding these

relationships focussed on the value that they added to participants managing their own wellbeing and strategies for support. For Quinn, the importance of working together to create a wider culture of support for all was a focus of their interview “we meet fortnightly...we’ve all got other pastoral responsibilities”. For other participants, such as Charlie, the emphasis they placed on this concept meant it stood as a theme distinct from others. When the researcher asked Charlie how they would manage emotional load at work they responded “*Each other...completely each other*”. Team working and sharing experiences of responsibility together appeared to be upheld as strategies that enabled connection, as well as the chance to ‘offload’ to talk to others who fundamentally understood the context of what participants experienced. Bobby expressed “*we both will be in tears at times, we do use each other a lot*” as an example of sharing connections. The need to be empathised with and the need to be understood by the person who participants talk to was expressed keenly throughout. This appeared to connect to the following overarching theme, current context.

### **Current Context**

All participants shared their experiences with working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse at home within the context of their current working environment. These discussions included reflections on governmental expectations, increasing responsibilities on the profession, resourcing issues including time as a result of this, and funding limitations specifically impacting on the ability to access support, for both staff and young people.

The increasing expectations of the profession of teaching were noted by Bobby who joked that once they were ‘just’ teachers. Bobby as a participant spoke widely of the importance of them being able to offer practical support, such as hampers at Christmas, to families and that this felt valuable in managing the emotional impact of their work. Riley’s comments echoed this approach as they noted that curriculum restrictions felt challenging as some children in their care needed to be ‘nurtured’ as a priority over academic learning.

Participants Frankie and Quinn stressed the significant impact that increasing expectations on the profession was having on the wellbeing of teachers with Frankie commenting “*Services have been cut, schools have taken on the brunt but... the actual system itself hasn’t stepped up*”. Quinn reflected that the culture of education was to keep going and that they felt in the current climate this was not likely to be able to be sustainable “*they squeeze and squeeze... there’s nothing else to give now*”.

Bobby, Charlie and Rowan all reflected on the challenge of the current context where they raised the issues of the level of need that they understood to exist within their settings was not able to be met by resource constraints and funding available to them. Rowan expressed the belief that there was not enough time available to support *“every child... that’s seeing anything”* referring to the higher levels of occurrence of children exposed to domestic abuse. Charlie and Bobby both noted the value of the Educational Psychology service available to them, but recognised that with the time needing to be purchased, they were not able to gain the support for all young people and staff that would benefit from service involvement *“a catchment like ours...we could put you [EPs] up for a year’s worth of supervision-y type stuff”*. The consideration of the profession of Educational Psychology in being helpful in these matters was noted as a possibility by several of the participants within this study and is discussed in further detail in the following chapter of this work.

## Chapter 5: Discussion

### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher will address how the findings of this study address the research questions that have been outlined in Chapter 2 of this work. Firstly, the question of how teachers experience working with children and young people who it is believed are exposed to domestic abuse will be addressed. This is in relation to previous research that has been explored within the literature review of this study. Secondly the consideration of how teachers manage emotionally sensitive information when working with these young people will be approached. The next section will address the consideration of whether teachers perceive that Educational Psychologists could be a profession that is able to offer support in these matters. Finally, the issue of whether teachers identify how they could be supported when working with children exposed to domestic abuse is explored. Following the address of the Research Questions the implications for future practice are considered. Limitations of the research and possible future areas of research are then presented. The work concludes with addressing of the quality criteria of qualitative research (Yardley, 2000), including how the researcher believes the research makes a unique contribution to this area of study. Finally, concluding comments are made.

#### 5.2.1 Addressing Research Question 1:

***What are the experiences of Teachers who are working with children and young people who it is believed are exposed to Domestic Abuse?***

To address this question, the researcher will consider how teachers have discussed their experiences of working with children and young people who they believe are exposed to domestic abuse at home. The key findings this study present in response to this are:

- Teachers discuss their experiences of working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse focussing on the importance of relationships with children, young people and families
- Teachers appear to base the need to establish trusting relationships with children and young people as a priority for understanding how best to offer individual support. They discuss behaviour changes, areas for concern and providing a safe space as important. These all



appear to be connected to the responsibility of safeguarding as a priority of the profession and the establishing of evidence to inform referrals to wider agencies such as social care.

- Teachers acknowledge that this area of their work impacts on them emotionally. This can be through worry regarding children and young people's safety, exacerbated by waiting for the accumulation of evidence, frustration with the current threshold criteria for social care involvement and subsequent feelings of helplessness.

The findings suggest that teachers place a heavy emphasis on the importance of forming relationships with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse with the purpose of offering support. Trust is noted as needing to be established, as is the need to 'know' children and young people in their care well. These discussions appeared to be connected to the importance of understanding behaviour as communication in order to safeguard, support and subsequently affect change for young people. Riley noted the importance of recognising individual differences between the children that they work with: *"this child shows incredible resilience and you, it... you would never have known"*. The recognition that not all children exposed to domestic abuse will suffer from adverse effects is an important one and noted within the literature review (Martinez-Torteya, Bogat, Von Eye & Levendosky, 2009). This adds further relevance to teacher positions on knowing and understanding the individuals they work with well.

The potential impact that exposure to domestic abuse can have on young people was discussed within the literature review, as was the importance of teachers recognising these behaviours as communicating concern for the purposes of safeguarding. This finding parallels that of Ellis (2012) who identified that a key theme for her participants was *The relationship with the child and family*. This theme included participants reflections that knowing children well was a requirement which supported teachers to notice behavioural changes which could raise concern, which has been echoed by participants of the present study:

*"whatever the-the reasons are, it always comes out in their behaviour"* (Rowan)

Interestingly, Ellis' (2012) findings suggest that teachers experience a level of fear when working with families where it is believed domestic abuse was an issue. This was both in fear for themselves regarding their own physical safety, and the fear of maintaining positive working relationships with families of concern (Ellis, 2012, p. 115). This was not a finding of the current study. Participants did raise the issue of the complexities of maintaining this relationship and acknowledged that the importance of trust and respect must be upheld. However, within these discussions it was clear that the teachers in this study felt the responsibility to safeguard the child at the centre as their priority

and so whilst they may make adaptations to manage relationships in a more 'delicate' way at times, ultimately they felt the need to remain open and honest about their concerns:

*"I'm trying to say it in a way that is gonna keep my relationship with mum. I do probably word things in a different way but...that's who I've got to have that relationship with"*

(Charlie)

The 'fear' expressed by Ellis' (2012) participants appeared to be echoed within the Swedish study by Markström and Mürger (2018) where it was noted that participants might be reluctant to report suspected concerns to the Child Protection Services (CPS) due to the worry that these may be unfounded, and that this accusation would be 'awful' as a parent (Markström & Mürger, 2018). The present study findings are contrary to this as the above quotation shows: participants noted always reporting concerns wherever they felt necessary, sometimes causing them frustration as a result which will be discussed in further detail a little later in this discussion. The contrast between this study and previous studies findings could be related to the context of the climate the work was completed in. Markström and Mürger's (2018) study sits within a different political context entirely, although the Swedish legislation expectation on school staff is that all concerns, including suspicions, are reported to the CPS in the form of a 'worry report' (Backlund, Wiklund & Östberg, 2012; Markström and Mürger's, 2018). This is a similar context to the UK system where 'flags' of safeguarding concern are expected to be raised (Gov.uk, 2015, 28). For the UK context it could be argued that the legislative changes over the past few years (discussed within the literature review of this work) may account for the difference in findings between Ellis' (Ellis, 2012) study and the present research. Potentially, in the current socio-political climate the expectation and responsibility of teachers in safeguarding children and young people may need to override personal fears of how these actions may impact on them otherwise. This discussion also seems to sit within the concept of there being a general acceptance from the current participants that this aspect of their work will impact upon them emotionally, as well as the challenges experienced in negotiating the responsibility of reporting concerns. This will be explored in further detail shortly.

It is possible that teachers place emphasis on the importance of relationships with young people as they feel the responsibility of understanding them deeply: perhaps responding to the wider expectations on the profession. Not only have studies evidenced that young people report schools are the "best place" (Humphreys & Mullender, 2002, p.23) to share concerns and seek support, but equally studies such as Byrne and Taylor (2007) note that teachers have higher levels of contact with children exposed to domestic abuse than other professionals. These reflections potentially contribute to the wider understanding of policy and legislation where it is anticipated that schools

and their staff have the most knowledge of children and young people such as Ofsted (2017) stressing that schools are central to the successful identification and support of children and young people who are exposed to domestic abuse within the home environment (Ofsted et al., 2017). Teachers within this study echoed this belief:

*“when we’re scoring on signs of safety, we’re nearly always the lowest...and that’s because we spend more time with the child than anyone else does”* (Bobby)

*“And we do know them very well...we’re with them six... sometimes seven hours a day”* (Riley).

The teachers recognising their position as being able to know children well, due to the time they spend together is a finding that further aligns with Ellis’ (2012; 2018) assertion that teachers are in a ‘good position’ to observe behavioural changes based on their knowledge of the child in comparison to that of other education professionals (Ellis, 2012, p. 115; 2018).

Time spent with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse appeared to be felt to not only strengthen teachers’ knowledge and understanding of individuals that they were supporting but also seemed to strengthen the importance of the connection for the young person. Participants discussed being valued by the young people that they support and that this relationship is significant in being able to model what healthy, supportive relationships with adults should feel like for young people. They noted the importance for these young people as being ‘held in mind’ by a consistent adult and regular ‘checking in’ as a useful strategy for maintaining positive relationships. These elements of the findings will be considered in further detail in the response to answering the present research ‘Research Question 2: *How do Teachers manage emotionally sensitive information in relation to these pupils?*’. Frankie reflected that at times, they had underestimated the importance of their relationship to individual young people, and Rowan expressed being a constant figure for young people they worked with:

*“when [yp] was leaving they gave me that [gesturing to object], and they made that and I was quite like awww....clearly meant a lot to them”* (Frankie)

*“building that relationship first...that they can trust and is constant”* (Rowan)

This aspect of the teacher’s experiences connects to the next area which the discussion will focus on: teachers experiencing emotional impact as a result of their work with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse.

The teachers all discussed the emotional impact that working with young people exposed to domestic abuse can have on them as individuals. This appeared to be intrinsically connected to the need to establish trusting and safe relationships with young people they were supporting. The importance of building relationships in schools with the intention of managing the above aspect of teachers work cannot be underestimated and these relationships involve emotional ‘work’, as noted in the considered literature (Helsing, 2007; Levi & Loeben, 2004; Markström & Münger, 2018; Uitto et al., 2015). Teachers discussed several emotions that they have experienced whilst supporting children and young people exposed to domestic abuse. Primarily this appeared to be worry. This emotional response feeling was reported to intensify with the need to wait. This was identified as being so that teachers could further support and safeguard individuals by building evidence that could contribute and, crucially for this discussion, reach criteria that warranted involvement from wider services such as Social Care. This also was linked to a repetitive nature of the process: *“we’re waiting for a disclosure, we’re waiting for...a disclosure”* (Quinn).

Teachers expressed that their knowledge and understanding of children led them to ‘feel’ or ‘suspect’ that there were safeguarding concerns for individuals. Participants discussed ‘gut’ feelings as being frequent, and that increasingly ‘sensing’ something was wrong would become a professional belief. This movement from feeling to understanding seems to be directly linked to professional experience, both in the experience of working directly with children exposed to domestic abuse and the experience of the professional understanding of behaviour as communication in general:

*“there’s some children that we just have a gut feeling about and that we know that there’s something there and there’s not enough...”* (Bobby)

The concept of teachers ‘feeling’ something is ‘wrong’ for children and young people is a finding that was noted by Münger & Markström (Münger & Markström, 2018). In their study the author’s argued that in the Swedish context, teachers based this understanding or feeling that something was wrong for children and young people on their longevity of experience. Whilst this was not always explicitly shared by participants in the current research, there is the recognition that they note patterns of behaviour based on previous involvement with similar cases. The above comment shared by Bobby is an example of where they felt concern, this becomes ‘fact’ over time subsequently leading Bobby to feel that a safeguarding referral would be warranted: but there is not ‘enough’ evidence for this to be accepted. This aspect of the participants experiences can be linked to the findings by Ellis (2012) that the emotional impact on teachers in this area of responsibility leads them to *“a desire to*

*‘have done the best that I can’*” (Ellis, 2012, p. 111). This is something that is echoed for the current research participants and will be explored in further detail in discussions responding to ‘Research Question 2: *How do Teachers manage emotionally sensitive information in relation to these pupils?*’ For the purpose of the current discussion regarding the emotional impact on teachers working with young people exposed to domestic abuse, the need to do ‘their best’ appears to be directly linked to the ability to access further support for them in the form of a successful safeguarding referral. Participants have expressed feeling guilt or negative emotions at the response of receiving information which confirms their feelings or suspicions of children’s exposure to the phenomenon and the potential momentary relief that this revelation can have to their wellbeing.

*“sometimes, which is even worse, is that you’re really pleased when something does come out, because...because then you know that we can get some support in place”*

(Charlie)

This feeling of relief, or pleasure, from a disclosure of abuse evidences the significance that working and establishing relationships with children and young people who are believed to be exposed to domestic abuse at home can have emotionally on teachers and resonates with Ellis’ (2012) assertion that secondary trauma (discussed in the literature review and in subsequent sections of this chapter) can be used to provide a framework for understanding the emotions connected to teachers responsibilities in this area (Ellis 2012).

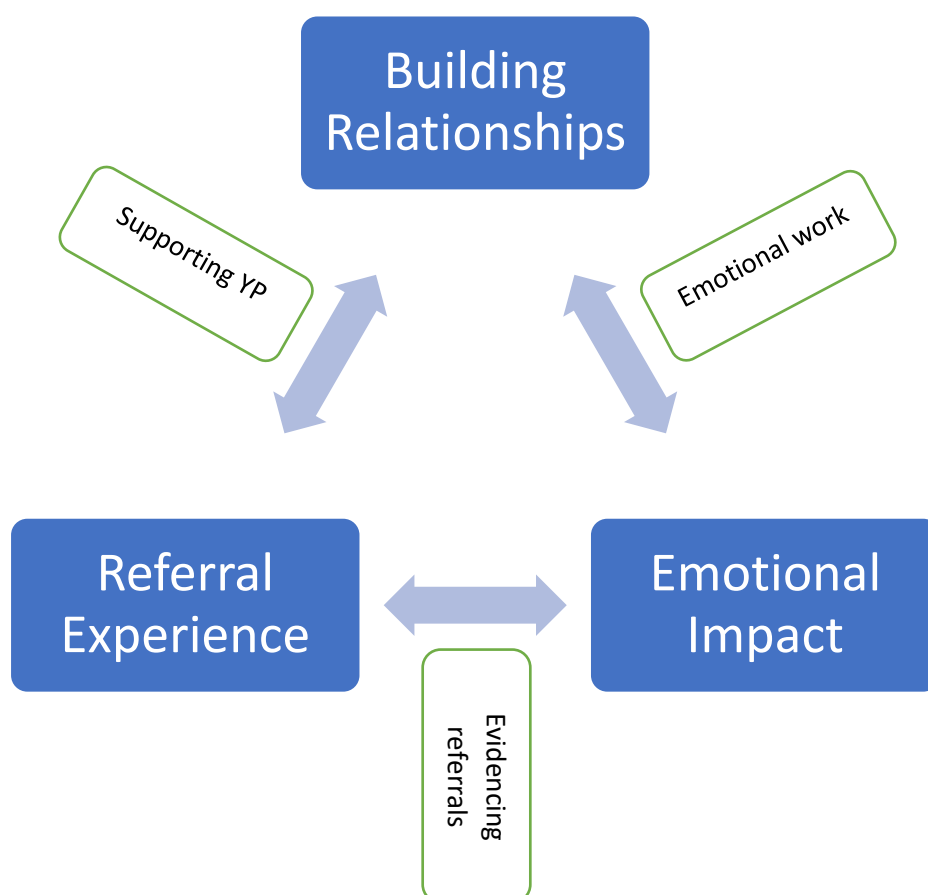
Teachers struggling with the accumulation of the ‘feeling or sense’ of believing there were safeguarding concerns for young people they supported regarding the phenomenon resulted in the necessity of safeguarding referrals to social care. This action feels directly connected to the need to do their best as noted above but equally evidences the teacher’s understanding of the responsibility of safeguarding referrals. It appeared that findings in this study resonate with that of Byrne and Taylor (2007) where teachers reported higher instances of concern than social worker participants were able to accept (Byrne & Taylor 2007). In the context of this research, the reality of the necessity of high levels of ‘factual’ evidence to meet criteria for social care involvement, meant feelings of frustration for teachers: *“there’s no tick box for ‘I’ve got a feeling’. So it is, it is frustrating”* (Frankie). For other participants these negative feelings experienced were in direct response to the feeling of not being able to action the help that they felt was needed, exacerbated by experience of feeling ‘not listened to’ or ‘judged’ for their concern for the young people they support:

*“just make you feel like you’re ridiculous for phoning for that... I’ve been in tears of rage...just frustration...but what are you sending that person home to now?”*

(Bobby)

The above experiences draw further parallels to the findings of Ellis (2012) who likens the need to focus on the accumulation of evidence and following procedures to Bion's (1959; 1984) concept of containment (Bion, 1959; 1984; Ellis, 2012). This approach will be discussed in further detail in subsequent sections of this chapter.

In conclusion, the above discussion responds to the research question *'What are the experiences of Teachers who are working with children and young people who it is believed are exposed to Domestic Abuse?'*. Teachers focussed their reflections on this area of research by noting the importance of relationships with children and young people, both to offer them support within their setting and to seek to continue to evidence their feelings of concern to contribute to successful referrals to wider support services such as social care. These relationships can impact upon teachers emotionally, but so too can the process of gathering evidence to warrant safeguarding referrals which are then unsuccessful. It appears that teachers may focus on the practical management of evidencing referrals to support emotional containment (Bion 1959;1984; Ellis, 2012), and subsequently help them to feel that they have 'done their best' (Ellis, 2012) as a strategy for support, both of which will be discussed in further detail in the following section. The following model attempts to represent the above experiences shared by teachers in response to the research question: *'What are the experiences of Teachers who are working with children and young people who it is believed are exposed to Domestic Abuse?'*.



### 5.2.2 Addressing Research Question 2:

#### *How do Teachers manage emotionally sensitive information in relation to these pupils?*

The key findings of the study which respond to the above Research Question are:

- Teachers focus their discussions concerning the experience of working with children who they believe are exposed to domestic on the practical application of strategies of support.
- The strategies of support discussed by teachers appear to fit into two interconnected categories. These are: the application of strategies of support to improve outcomes for young people and strategies that offer teachers capacity to manage the emotional impact of this work.
- Teachers discuss the strategies of support available to them as being impacted on by the current context of their working environment.

The findings suggest that teachers rely on the application of strategies of support to improve positive outcomes for the children and young people that they work with. The teachers noted that the relationships they formed with the young people they worked with (discussed in the previous section) enabled them to identify what practical strategies they could apply to offer support, based on their experience, knowledge and understanding. Teachers commented on training they had received by wider professionals such as Educational Psychologists as being useful, and easily applicable to a wide range of circumstances:

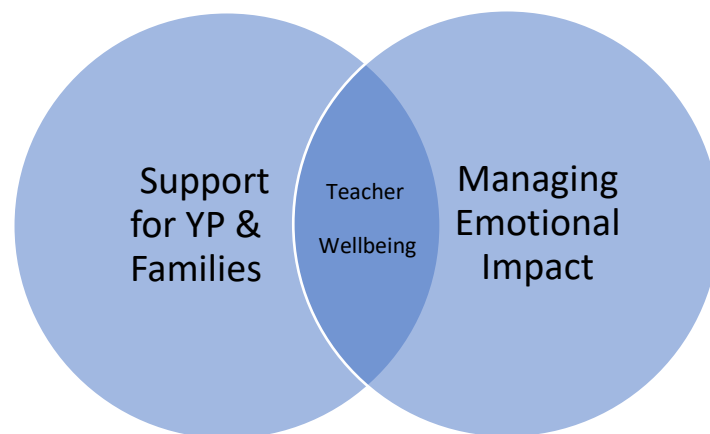
*“Now with [LA specific approach] the format is slightly different is that you’re... bit more direct... having the confidence to say that, has brought a lot more out.”*

*“name [finger click] the emotion. [Deep breath] Um... kind of that way the children uh... are moore able to talk...which I feel so much happier with”* (Rowan)

Teachers shared that practical approaches to improve outcomes for young people, such as the focus on supporting their emotional literacy, not only equipped individuals to communicate increasingly effectively with others in the future (promoting inclusion and social skills) but it also enabled a young person the possibility of communicating areas of concern to them should they wish to make a disclosure to either the teacher themselves or other professionals. In the previous section it was outlined that teachers may focus on the gathering of evidence to strengthen referrals to wider agencies such as social care, based on the understanding that 1) safeguarding is a priority for keeping children and young people safe and 2) young people’s outcomes can be improved by the

wider support of these agencies. Focussing on the practical task such as this has been found to be linked to managing wellbeing (Ellis, 2012). The above comments shared by Rowan connect the practical application of strategies intended for the purpose of supporting children and young people to emotional support aimed at alleviating the emotional impact that this responsibility of teachers' roles can cause. Similarly, teachers have addressed that wider strategies that can be offered practically to support children, young people and families such as foodbank vouchers, sourcing uniform and simply being a safe space for people to share concerns have been noted by participants to contribute to feeling 'helpful'. The interaction between the practical support and management of emotional impact subsequently contributing to feelings of improved wellbeing can be represented visually as follows:

#### **Model of the Interaction of Strategies for Support**



The focus on the application of practical strategies to offer support for young people and families is a finding that has been discussed in previous studies such as Ellis (2012; 2018). Ellis (2012) reflects that by following the application of practical procedures and strategies to offer support such as the gathering of evidence to support a referral to social care, a strategy noted by both her own participants and the current research (*"we have our policies around that and our strategies here, um... which are very successful"* (Rowan)), teachers are applying the concept of containment (Bion, 1959, 1984). Ellis (2012) notes: *"Procedures seem to function in managing and providing guidance where none seem immediately apparent"* (Ellis, 2012, p. 114).

The researcher would argue that within the present research, the teacher participants have discussed a certain level of management which appears both contrary to Ellis' (2012) assertion, and



at the same time complimentary. Teachers were explicit about the importance of them applying strategies which they relied upon to manage the emotional impact of the work they undertook. Therefore, they appear to be taking responsibility of the management of emotional containment as a proactive step. At the same time, by taking this step they could be argued to be simultaneously acknowledging their need for emotional containment (Bion, 1959; 1984) whether this is explicitly understood or not.

Crucially at this point it is important to consider that the above findings and subsequent discussions could be argued to be complimentary to Ellis' (2018) findings regarding the experiences of teachers working with domestic abuse and the unconscious processes of containment (Bion, 1984) and denial (Hinshelwood, 1991) being intricately part of that experience (Ellis, 2018). Whilst the researcher acknowledges that this could be the case, they feel that in order to uphold the position of an interpretivist, presenting the positions of the participants as the researcher understands they themselves conveyed, the application of applying a psychoanalytic lens to the remainder of the discussions concerning the response to the research question *'How do Teachers manage emotionally sensitive information in relation to these pupils?'* does not seem to be the best 'fit'. However, the researcher acknowledges that they refer to the notion of teachers applying 'self-protective' strategies in the following discussions which could be viewed from the psychoanalytical perspective as processes of 'containment' or 'denial' (Ellis, 2018).

As noted in the response to the first research question, teachers appeared to need to feel that they had done their 'best' (Ellis, 2012) or had done 'enough'. The concept of 'enough' was raised by several participants who seemed to equally place this in the position of protecting themselves and other staff from the ramifications the potential of 'missing' a child could hold, but equally in managing to be able to prevent themselves from the emotional effects of persistent 'worry', recognised as an emotional response and discussed in the previous section:

*"I've had, I've had, kind of ... yeah, numerous sleepless nights. I think, what I find is, it's not individual cases... ...that you worry about, the volume, what you're worrying about is, is the cumulative of um ... Have we done the right thing for that?"*

*"all we can do is just say, 'we've done everything that we can'"* (Quinn)

A significant strategy discussed by teachers that responds to the research question *'How do Teachers manage emotionally sensitive information in relation to these pupils?'* is the concept of the importance of team and colleague relationships. Teachers noted that confidence in sharing

information, shared responsibilities of working together to support children, young people and families where domestic abuse was felt to be a concern and colleague friendships all contributed to their discussions of the application of distinct strategies of support which served to alleviate some of the emotional impact of their responsibilities. Again, Ellis (2018) likens this to the concept of being emotionally contained. All teachers in this study note the importance of being able to connect and talk with others who understood them. This concept bridges the response for all four research questions the current study seeks to address and so the researcher will lightly touch upon it here, before discussing in further detail in the responses to the remaining research questions. It is here that the issue of supervision can first be raised. The lack of the 'containment' of formal supervision is noted by Ellis (2018) as being something that participants of her research link to the current climate by which the teaching profession is influenced. This was considered by one participant who noted the interview they were involved in was offering the 'space to talk' or reflection that current school requirements rendered them unable to take advantage of (Ellis, 2018). The present research participants all noted the importance of this space to share and connect which will be addressed in subsequent sections of this work.

A final reflection of the identification of how teachers manage emotionally sensitive information in response to the experience of working with children and young people who are exposed to domestic abuse connects with the above note from Ellis' (2018) participant regarding the current context. Teachers discussed their approach to managing strategies of support (applied to reduce the emotional impact of this area of their work) as being directly impacted upon by the reality of the current socio-political context of their working environment. Lloyd (2018) addresses the increasing expectations on schools and staff within an increasingly paradoxical environment (Lloyd, 2018). Movements such as an increasing focus on the importance of schools supporting mental health (Department of Health, and Department for Education [DoH and DfE], 2017) emphasise an increasing expectation upon schools to support our children and young people via a 'whole-child' approach rather than solely focussing on education and attainment alone. However, Lloyd (2018) notes that these increases in expectations continue to exist alongside an educational system that is 'attainment-driven' (Lloyd, 2018, p. 9). The experiences of the present research participants appear to uphold this paradox: equally wanting to support and able to identify what approaches in their professional opinion would enable this, yet restricted on how they can manage to achieve this work:

*"it's not money or confidentiality, it's...it's...it's um...uh ... government curriculum  
...expectations...we feel that there's some children who we would just love to...to nurture".*

(Riley)

This section has sought to address the research question '*How do Teachers manage emotionally sensitive information in relation to these pupils?*'. Teachers focussed discussions on managing strategies of support that appeared to enable them to feel 'useful' and contribute to the responsibilities of the profession in working with children and young people who are exposed to domestic abuse. Practical application of procedures and strategies of safeguarding manage this responsibility as well as contributing to the alleviation of the emotional impact that work with this phenomenon can cause. Ellis (2018) maintains that the focus of teachers on strategies that support can be viewed through the psychoanalytical lens of the unconscious processes of containment (Bion, 1984) and denial (Hinshelwood, 1991; Ellis, 2018). Teachers appear to take proactive action to manage the emotional impact that this area of their work can result in, such as recognising the importance of positive team relationships providing them with 'space to talk'. This will be discussed in further depth in subsequent sections of the discussion chapter. Finally, teachers noted that the management of emotionally sensitive information and the application strategies seeking to support this are directly impacted upon by the current socio-political context of their working environment.

### 5.2.3 Addressing Research Question 3:

***Do Teachers perceive Educational Psychologists as being professionals that would be able to offer support in these matters?***

The key findings that contribute to addressing this research question are:

- Teachers express that training received by Educational Psychologists has been helpful in providing a range of strategies that can offer support to contribute towards improving future outcomes for children and young people they believe are exposed to domestic abuse.
- Teachers report that they feel supported by positive relationships established with Educational Psychologists and that there have been times when this relationship has effected positive change in their roles.
- Teachers place the potential role of Educational Psychologists supporting them in this area, and other matters as being intrinsically linked to the restrictions of the current context of their working environment.

As already discussed, teachers expressed a significant focus on offering practical strategies of support to children and young people exposed to domestic abuse, hoping to improve future outcomes for individuals. Participants in this study specifically noted training provided by the Local Authority's Educational Psychology Service which enabled them to feel confident in being able to support children and young people successfully:

*"an EP came in and gave a whole school training...Emotion coaching... that's just invaluable...it's completely transferrable"* (Riley)

This aligns with Ellis' (2012; 2018) quantitative findings that teachers experience increased confidence in managing the support of children and young people exposed to domestic abuse, when they have received training, although this finding was in response to training that directly focussed on participant understanding of domestic abuse as phenomenon. In Ellis' (2012) research this training had been offered by the Local Authority Educational Psychology Service where her research was completed. Although the training discussed by participants in the current research was not focussed specifically on the phenomenon of domestic abuse, the act of training teachers in a range of strategies that can equip teachers to offer support that is transferrable to a range of needs is a valuable consideration for the EP profession. Gallagher (2014) noted this in her study focussing on *Educational Psychologists' conceptualisation of domestic violence* where it was stressed that EPs can have a wider role in supporting teaching staff in association with this phenomenon by offering

training in how to respond emotionally to vulnerable children (Gallagher, 2014). This finding is significant when considering the issue of the current context raised by teachers in this study and to be addressed shortly in response to the current research question.

Teachers express that where positive relationships with EPs have been formed, the emotional support through contact with them is possible. Charlie noted that when they contacted the EP their concerns were listened to and respected, and any advice offered was positively received as a result of this mutual respect. It was shared that, for one participant, the involvement of the EP in the support of children and young people exposed to domestic abuse had enabled a positive change to occur in the change of focus of their multiple responsibilities:

*“the EP said uh, ‘I just... I do not know how you are doing this’ or ‘I don’t know how you’re managing’... You know, ‘how often do you get to talk to people’ and actually I wasn’t... and so that’s why the change happened.”* (Rowan)

This is not a finding that seems to have been shared by previous research which focusses on the experiences of teachers working with pupils exposed to domestic abuse. It is however noted as a ‘hope’ for the future of EPs working in this area, as noted in the discussions below regarding whole system change.

Where teachers are working in settings which are addressing the wider consideration of applying a whole-system approach to supporting children and young people’s needs, the potential to gain support from the EP team to contribute to staff wellbeing was already considered a positive use of EP time for staff and, subsequently, children and young people:

*“I’d already talked to [EP name] and [EP name] as a work plan for this year, that we were going to introduce some supervision...”* (Quinn)

*“the EP team you know the EP team having the ability to give us someone to talk to ...and offload stuff and that’s really important”.* (Frankie)

Quinn’s example above sits within the context that they expressed a significant strategy that enabled them to feel positively about their work with children exposed to domestic abuse (alleviating some of the emotional impact they experienced as a result of this) lay in the task of creating an inclusive and supportive culture for all at the school: addressing the importance of wide spread systemic change to support positive outcomes for all. Recognition of the importance of staff welfare was included as part of this approach. The possibility of EP’s being in a good position to offer

‘whole school’ support to facilitate this type of culture change is directly noted by Ellis (2018), as is the possibility of EP’s being in a positive position to offer supervision (Ellis, 2012; 2018), an assertion equally upheld by Gallagher (2014). The research findings for Quinn and Frankie within the current study are examples that, within the context of this Local Authority, the Educational Psychology Service is being recognised as beneficial to the contribution of delivering supervision to the teaching profession.

The current context of the working environment impacting upon teachers’ consideration of whether EPs are a profession that could offer support in this matter will now be addressed. Teachers discussed the limitations of involving the EP in work regarding this phenomenon as being linked with current resourcing restrictions, including time as a resource. Teachers reflected on the necessity to manage how they used time purchased with the Local Authority’s EP Service carefully, and expressed a need to apply their own hierarchy of need criteria as a way of ensuring that they were able to offer support available to them as widely as possible:

*“in a school like ours, where actually we could probably take up all of your [EP] time from an educational point...We can also equally take up all of your time with children who are experiencing that sort of thing”* (Charlie)

The issue of resourcing has been noted by teachers within Ofsted’s (2017) report as a potential barrier to offering children and young people the support they need (Ofsted et al., 2017). This matter was equally noted by Lloyd (2018) as being an important issue impacting on the potential of schools to support children and young people affected by domestic abuse (Lloyd, 2018; Ofsted et al., 2017). The limitations of funding available led some teachers (but not all as noted above) to consider that the use of the EP service in offering supervision might not be possible:

*it’s not just the time that the teacher is taken out of class...then obviously that has to be covered. It’s also... we have to buy into you now as well”.* (Rowan)

The above example resonates with the findings of Hulusi and Maggs (2015) noted in the literature review. The author’s noted that there appeared to be some resistance from the teachers involved in their study to the application of supervision; noting time constraints, resourcing issues and lack of space available as barriers to embedding the practice (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015).

The above discussions indicate that teachers identify the profession of Educational Psychology as being one that may offer support regarding their work with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse. Training in strategies that offer wider emotional support for young people was noted as being helpful, as was the advice received from Local Authority EPs when offered within the

context of an established positive working relationship. For two participants, the use of EPs in offering supervision was recognised and accessed. However, it was clear that teachers perceived the current context they work in as directly affecting decision making regarding the question of the effective use of EP time. This issue will be continued to be addressed in response to the final research question of the current study.

#### 5.2.4 Addressing Research Question 4:

##### **Do Teachers identify how they could be supported when working with children exposed to domestic abuse?**

The key findings which address this research question are:

- Teachers note the importance of being able to talk to others regarding this aspect of their work, within the confines of a trusted and safe relationship that upholds confidentiality. These discussions were seated within the context of teachers' identified strategies for support when working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse.
- Teachers express the importance of establishing trusted relationships with those they talk to. They seem to identify an importance on shared experience as a contributor to establishing this relationship. The need to be listened to, understood and empathised with is evident within discussions regarding teachers' perceptions of effective support.
- Teachers place the consideration of how they could best be supported within the context of their current working environment.

Teachers expressed consciously applying their own strategies for support which they felt alleviated some of the emotional impact that this area of their work can create. Detailed discussion regarding these strategies can be found in previous sections of this discussion. For the purposes of responding to the current research question, '*Do Teachers identify how they could be supported when working with children exposed to domestic abuse?*', the researcher will focus on the exploration of the teachers' discussions of these strategies to focus on the concept of positive working relationships. Teachers applied various labels to identify others in response to this notion such as 'colleague' or 'team member'. Regardless of how they applied these labels, teachers upheld the necessity to talk, share and connect with others as an essential strategy to offer them support.

This is a finding that resonates with research lamenting the absence of supervision available to teachers as a 'frontline service' (Ellis, 2018, p.8; Hawkins & Shohet, 2012). One of the fundamental principles underpinning the concept of supervision is arguably the concept of containment (Bion, 1959; 1961; 1984) which has been raised in earlier discussions of this chapter regarding Ellis' research findings (Ellis, 2012; 2018). As noted in the literature review and previous sections of this discussion, teaching as a profession is likely to be considered as high in emotional labour (Hargreaves, 1998; Kinman, Wray & Strange, 2011) and is characterised by "*deep personal and emotional investment*" (Kirk & Wall, 2010, p.631). One of the justifications for the arguments for the



appropriate application of supervision in offering support to the teaching profession is that it has been found to alleviate high levels of emotional labour, lowering levels of burnout or exhaustion (Carlson, Ferguson, Hunter & Whitten, 2012; Edwards, 2016; Grandey, 2000; Pisaniello, Winefield & Delfabbro, 2012).

Teachers in this research uphold that they action emotionally supportive strategies as a conscious aspect of their role. Participants expressed that this was a necessity for them as a result of previous experiences which evidenced the potential harm that could occur if the right support was not available to them, as well as the awareness of the potential risk for others:

*"I became so...dulled to it. Ummm. And it does dull you...It just becomes.....yeah just one of those things."*

*"I do watch people and I think... I can see you're making mistakes that I you know I can see it becoming ... burnt out is the phrase"* (Frankie)

The above example connects the findings to the concept previously noted by research which indicates the potential for the teaching profession to experience secondary trauma as a result of their responsibilities (Ellis, 2012).

Teachers expressed different positions on the consideration of receiving formal supervision. Discussions were based in the context of thoughts regarding supportive relationships. The possibility of the profession of Educational Psychology being in a prime position to offer teachers and school staff formal supervision has been upheld in previous research relating to the phenomenon of domestic abuse (Ellis, 2012; 2018; Gallagher, 2014). This has been previously noted in response to research question three, as is the finding that some participants in this research work in settings that receive supervision from the Local Authority's Educational Psychology Service. Other participants appear to be unsure whether 'formal' supervision would be necessary, based on the quality of the support they were already in receipt of through team members:

*it's like, informal supervision isn't it?... But it's formal enough...it's informal but it's formal because of our roles...but it's informal coz you don't have to be filling a form"*

(Charlie)

As discussed in response to the previous research question, reflections on the use of the profession of Educational Psychology to offer support to teachers in this matter was intertwined within teachers' identification of the limitations in the current context of their working environment:

*“Funding was no object we’d have our own EP our own social worker...our own play therapist”*

(Bobby) . It is possible issues such as funding, noted above, have resulted in teachers feeling it necessary to be increasingly self-sufficient in managing strategies to support their own wellbeing. This is a concept that is considered in the following discussions.

Teachers in the present research, with the exception of those in receipt of EP supervision, appear to uphold that support in the form of talking therapies, and perhaps subsequent ‘containment’ (Ellis, 2012; 2018), may best be offered as part of ‘within-school’ support, rather than received from external sources. Experience that had led teachers to this belief seemed to be seated in their clarification of the characteristics of what effective support felt like for them, and significantly the importance of being ‘understood’ by the person offering the support: *“they’re on my side... If you see what I mean”* (Rowan). There was an emphasis on the need to simply be able to share, and not expect advice as a result of this:

*“I think part of it is just knowing that you have someone that you can talk to and it’s not that they have all the answers ... oh my god that’d be amazing, it’s about having someone ...who’s just there and ‘god I know yeah, it’s shit yeah’... ‘I understand’ you know, in your school. Someone to hold your emotional sick bucket for you.”.* (Frankie)

This finding appears to align with Kinman et al. (2011) who found that workplace social support appeared to alleviate the effects associated with emotional labour, reduce burnout and increase job satisfaction in teaching (Kinman et al., 2011). Crucially, whilst teachers of this study felt that they were well supported, they attributed this to being specific to the settings where they worked, and seemed to note a shared understanding that this was not likely to be the case for other teaching professionals: *“we’re really lucky that, kind of, we’ve got this room...it’s a bit of a... haha... a ranting room”* (Charlie). This example not only notes the ‘luck’ of the staff of the school but places emphasis on the importance of safe spaces available to staff to access appropriate support, an aspect which the findings of Hulusi and Maggs (2015) comment upon. The author’s note that resources such as space were identified as barriers to the possibility of the use of supervision in the teaching profession to support emotional wellbeing (Hulusi & Maggs, 2015).

The above discussion returns the identification of strategies that offer support by teachers into the socio-political context of their working environment. This has been addressed in previous sections of this discussion. Within the literature review the issue of resourcing was found to lie within the acknowledgement of funding cuts to the UK’s education system since 2010 (Belfield, et al., 2018). It

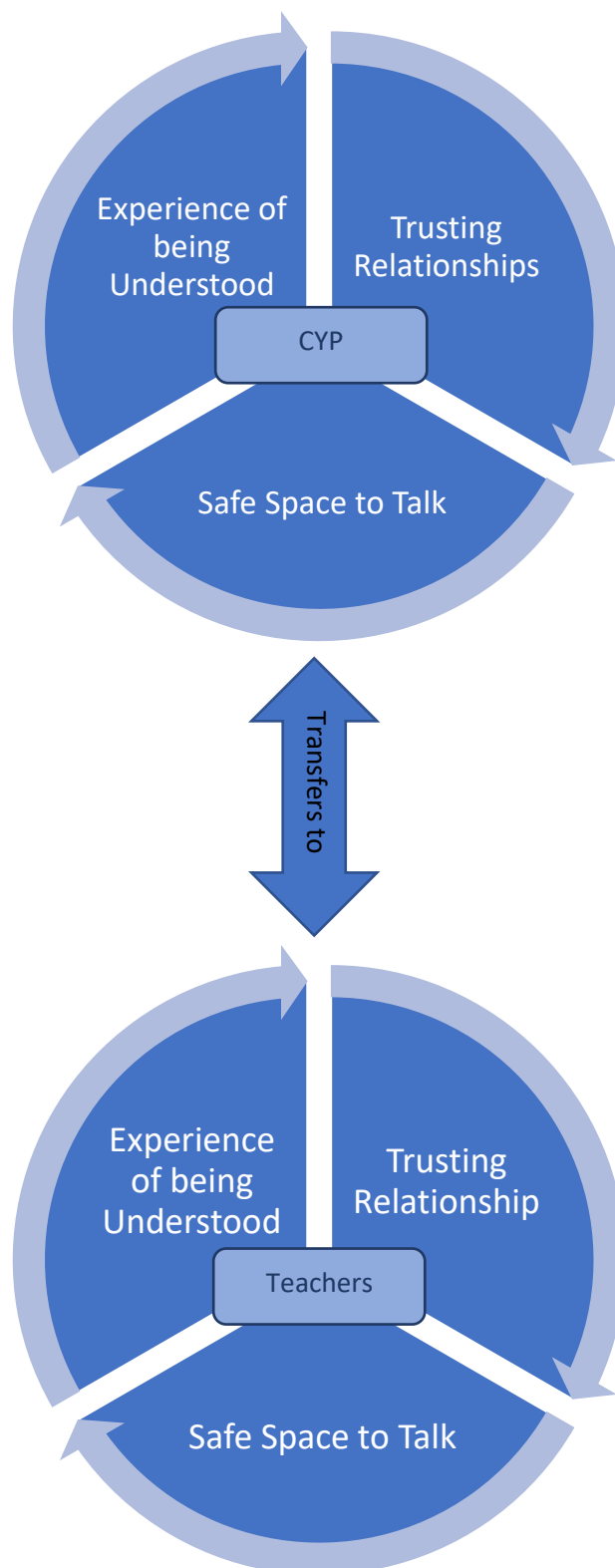
was noted budgetary restrictions have not only affected staff pay but subsequently numbers of support staff available and teachers have noted this as impacting on mounting workload pressures. It was also raised that wider training and CPD have been impacted upon by resourcing restrictions (Lloyd, 2018; National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers [NASUWT], 2018) having potential implications in the context of the current research's findings that training may increase confidence in teachers application of strategies that offer them support. To further add to the context of teachers' identification of support: wider funding cuts have resulted in some areas losing valuable external support services for victims of domestic abuse, perhaps placing further pressure upon the expectations on within-school support (Lloyd & Ramon, 2017; Ofsted et al. 2017). This was noted by Frankie:

*"services have been cut schools have taken on the brunt but schools haven't, schools' support systems haven't risen up to actually...cope with that in terms of like... the staff have stepped up, but the actual system itself hasn't stepped up to support the staff who've stepped up, does that make sense?"* (Frankie).

This example places the findings of this research as contributing to the debate of increasing expectations on school and the possible impact of this on the teaching profession. It also, the researcher believes, highlights the potential for the development of a model of support which reflects the expectation on teaching to offer wider support to the children and young people they work with. Much of the above discussion has focussed on the identification of support strategies and what these should include for the profession. It feels as if the teachers within this study identify the importance of strategies that they themselves have noted as applying to the support of children and young people they work with.

Teachers note the importance of offering children and young people: Trusting Relationships, A Safe space to talk and the Experience of being Understood or empathised with. The researcher poses that the teachers within this study identify that they benefit from the same approach. This can be visually represented in the model below.

**Model of Effective Support identified by Teachers working with CYP exposed to Domestic Abuse.**



In this section the researcher has sought to respond to the research question *‘Do Teachers identify how they could be supported when working with children exposed to domestic abuse?’*. Findings suggest that teachers base their discussions regarding this within the context of strategies of support and relationships which have been further addressed in previous sections of this discussion. Teachers note the importance of positive working relationships with others as part of their approach to this. This aspect of the findings draws comparison to previous research suggestions that teaching as a profession would benefit from supervision, and EPs may be in good stead to offer this (Ellis, 2012; 2018; Gallagher, 2014). Whilst some participants of this study access supervision from Local Authority EPs, others take a ‘within-school’ approach to managing this: perhaps influenced by the identified restrictions of the socio-political context. Teachers appear to reflect that the support they offer young people in the form of Trusting Relationships, a Safe Space to talk and the Experience of being Understood, would be equally beneficial if applied to themselves. A model of this finding has been developed to represent the importance of offering teachers effective support when working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse.

### **5.3 Implications for Professional Practice**

As a researcher a prime motivation for completing this work was to develop and contribute to a wider professional understanding of the experiences of teachers working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse, particularly that which may inform the practice of Educational Psychology. The researcher proposes that the research findings have implications for both the teaching profession and Educational Psychology.

The identification and development of a potential model to guide supportive practice in schools for teachers working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse has implications for professional practice and the recognition of the importance of supporting staff wellbeing. This aligns with Ellis’ (2018) assertion that the profession of teaching is under increasing demands in the current context concerning the balance of educational attainment and responding to the emotional needs of their pupils (Ellis, 2018; Lloyd, 2018). Whilst ‘frontline’ professionals such as social workers and psychologists are in receipt of supervision in recognition of the fact that emotional work of their roles requires emotional ‘containment’ to continue to be effective in professional practice, this is not something which all teachers are able to access. Previous research has noted that this should change (Ellis, 2012; 2018; Gallagher, 2018). The present research findings suggest that whilst teachers acknowledge that supervision would be helpful, the reality of the context they work in requires them to focus on more proactive ‘within-school’ support. This implicates wider Senior Leadership Team

action to enable this support to become embedded and part of a wider culture of effective change for all.

The Educational Psychology Service within the Local Authority where the present research was completed is recognised by some settings as being able to offer support and supervision to staff to support their health and wellbeing in the workplace. This offers the opportunity for other Educational Psychology services to achieve the same within their own Local Authorities. Additionally, the current research findings could suggest that wider awareness for the Educational Psychology profession of the impact of exposure to domestic abuse for children and young people and, subsequently, the experience of teachers in supporting these vulnerable individuals needs to be achieved. Statistics concerning the exposure of this phenomenon highlighted by this work are alarming and the experiences shared by its participants should be acknowledged, although it is recognised that these cannot be considered generalisable. However, it can be posited that within the Local Authority where the current research is conducted, teachers consider the exposure to domestic abuse for the children and young people they work with as significant and subsequently Educational Psychologists working in this area (and perhaps across the wider profession) may benefit from increased awareness of the issue. This can be considered to apply to both the implications for children and young people exposed to domestic abuse and the implications for teachers who support these individuals daily. As a result of this, the researcher has developed a brief guide for Educational Psychologists to raise awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people they may work with. A copy of this document 'Considering the Impact of Exposure to Domestic Abuse for CYP for Educational Psychologists' can be found in the Appendices (please see Appendix 16). Key take away messages within this document include:

- Statistics that indicate the significance of the issue
- Behaviours that children and young people exposed to domestic abuse might display
- Possible steps that EPs can take when working in this area.

The above further implicates the profession of Educational Psychology as being in a prime position to offer wider training and guidance on effecting systemic change within schools to support wellbeing for all (Gallagher, 2014). The findings of the research note that in the context of this study, the Local Authority EP service is currently being used as supporting schools in this way and offering wider support and supervision as previous study findings have recommended (Ellis, 2012; 2018; Gallagher, 2018).

## **5.4 Limitations of the Research.**

The researcher will now address the possible limitations of this study. The first limitation that should be acknowledged is the recognition that in the use of the methodological approach, the findings of this study may not be considered generalizable. This was acknowledged within the Methodology chapter, as was the position that this was not an aim of the research. Alongside this it is important to acknowledge the role as researcher and subsequent influence over the findings. Explicitly stated throughout this work is the acceptance that the work within is subject to the researcher's own interpretations, which by nature are subjective, and as such the findings of this study may not be able to be replicated in other research. Whilst the researcher does not consider this a weakness of the research due to their own personal position on the value they place in qualitative research, it nevertheless should be acknowledged. Further limitations of the research are the considerations of the fact that it is firmly seated in both the current context of the teaching profession and the context of the Local Authority where the research was completed.

### **5.4.1 Position of the Researcher**

A limitation that must be acknowledged lies in the position as a researcher considering research question three, which aimed to see if teachers identify the profession of Educational Psychology as being able to offer them support when working with CYP exposed to domestic abuse. All participants in this study were aware of the researcher's position of Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) within the Local Authority's Educational Psychology Service (EPS) and as such this offers the potential for bias to occur in the participant's responses to the researcher. It is possible that participants responded to this consideration more favourably as recognition of the researcher's inclusion as part of this service. In order to somewhat alleviate the potential for this bias, the researcher did not complete research within settings where they were likely to work in their capacity as a TEP.

### **5.4.2 Limitations of the Sample and Setting.**

A further consideration regarding the limitations of the research lies in the purposive sample of participants. Head teachers were required to act as 'gatekeepers' of the research, offering permission for the researcher to contact staff in their setting. This means that it is possible that the Head teachers who gave consent for the research to be completed within their settings were confident in the experience of staff regarding this area of their work. It is possible to hypothesise that schools where senior leadership teams do not consider the concept of domestic abuse as being influential on the development of the students in their care would not apply to take part in this

research. The position of the 'gatekeeper's' attitude and awareness of the phenomenon of domestic abuse and the subsequent impact exposure to such may have on children and young people will therefore immediately limit the sample to those teachers working in settings where the SLT (Head teachers) recognise the importance of supporting their students in this area.

This similarly applies to the consideration that all participants gave their time willingly to contribute to the work, and opted to complete interviews on site, often as part of their school day. This could suggest that these teachers may have more time available to focus on their wellbeing as part of a wider culture of support in their settings, than perhaps the experiences 'typical' in teaching within the current socio-political context discussed by Lloyd (Lloyd, 2018). It could be argued that teachers who may report negative experiences regarding wider time constraints, emotional support and expectations on them may not have felt able to take part in this study. Equally, Head Teachers who suspected that staff may not report favourable experiences of supportive working environments could have withheld consent for their setting to be included in the current research.

Additionally, Head teachers who offered consent to take part in the research may have applied pressure, perhaps unknowingly, to the staff members who then participated in the present research. This may have occurred simply by a member of staff in a position of seniority discussing the topic with them as part of their working day.

Limitations which apply to the setting of the research encompass the above acknowledgement that teachers working in settings which were afforded the time to talk with the researcher are likely to be working in environments where the health and wellbeing of staff members are upheld as priorities. Similarly, this connects the limitations of the position of the researcher as outlined above. The schools which were initially approached to take part in the research all had a pre-existing relationship with the LA's Educational Psychology Service and therefore could be argued to be more likely to report favourably on this service and subsequently the experience of the EP profession as in a position to offer support. Those settings who do not engage with the LA's EPS may have offered alternative perspectives.

A further limitation of the study can be found in the acknowledgement that the constraints on the current research have not allowed for detailed examination into possible areas of interest to the research. Discussion on these can be found within the subsequent section of this discussion.



## **5.5 Possible directions for Future Research**

As part of the above section the researcher notes that there are areas of research that they feel would warrant further and more detailed consideration, which the current research constraints has not allowed for.

One such area is the consideration of the formulation of personal constructs such as professional identity (Hymans, 2008) of teachers in response to their experiences of working in this area. There are frequent discussions from teachers in the addressing of the research question four that appear to connect to the concept of the creation of a professional identity, setting teachers apart collectively through the belief of the existence of shared characteristics and values upheld by members of the profession. The concept of professional identity is an area of consideration which constraints on the current research do not afford the space for a discussion that would do it justice. Hymans (2008) conducted work which explored this aspect of working with EPs and experiences of multi-agency working. The researcher feels that these findings could warrant further research concerning experiences of teachers within the multi-agency context in response to their work with domestic abuse as a phenomenon. Similarly, elements of the characteristics of effective helping relationships have also been noted by participants, but as yet have been unable to be examined in further detail.

A further consideration for the possibility of future areas of research lies in the acknowledged limitations of the research being firmly seated in both the current context of the teaching profession and the context of the Local Authority where the research was completed. Whilst it is accepted that findings of qualitative research cannot be generalized, it is important to consider that the current study contributes to a relative gap in the literature concerning this topic and the completion of similar studies in other localities may be considered beneficial. In addition to this the researcher feels that further research into the experiences of EPs working with this phenomenon may be warranted. Gallagher's (Gallagher, 2014) study sits within a specific context, which the examination of recent adaptations to legislation and policy within the literature review, could indicate that changes to how EPs conceptualise their role in relation to domestic abuse over the past few years may have occurred.

## **5.6 Quality Criteria for Qualitative Research**

In an above section of this work the researcher has acknowledged that the qualitative nature of their research is a possible limitation to the wider acceptance of the findings. In the following section the

researcher aims to justify the position of this research. To do this they will outline how the research meets the four quality criteria of qualitative research as outlined by Yardley (Yardley, 2000). Within these discussions the researcher will also consider the possibility that this research offers a unique contribution to the relative gap identified in the literature review.

### ***Sensitivity to context***

This research has sought to gain as wide an understanding as possible of the complexities of the nature of the concept of domestic abuse as a phenomenon and the relevance to this topic for teachers and wider professionals such as Educational Psychologists. The theoretical underpinnings of the methodological approach have been examined and the researcher has endeavoured to keep the principles of IPA at the forefront of their involvement with the research. Although findings of qualitative research cannot be generalized, a relative strength of this work lies in the ability to contribute to a 'vertical generalisation' of understanding of the topic (Johnson, 1997). The importance of the socio-cultural setting of the study was acknowledged and upheld. The social context of the relationship between participant and researcher was considered and the application of semi-structured interview techniques enabled a data gathering to take on a more natural conversation style of interaction upheld by Potter and Wetherell (Potter and Wetherell, 1995). The researcher has endeavoured to maintain the position of the participants as the focus of the work, although they acknowledge that this is ultimately achieved through the lens of interpretation.

### ***Commitment and rigour***

The researcher believes they can attest to an in-depth engagement with the topic of research, firstly by acknowledging their position as a researcher within the context of an individual who identifies as experiencing domestic abuse. The engagement with this topic continued to be a professional area of interest in both early years work and experience as TEP. They have endeavoured to apply the rigour of the analytical approaches of IPA to each data set and have aimed to keep the individual voice at the fore of the focus of the work.

### ***Transparency and coherence***

The study has aimed to offer the finding's coherence by upholding the intentions of the initial aim of the research: to hear teachers' experiences of working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse. Coherence has been applied in the presentation of the research findings where the researcher endeavoured to focus the attention towards the narrative of each participant as distinct from each other as well as from the potential for other more analytical approaches to understanding constructions of their experiences. Every effort to apply transparency to the research has been

made, from initial ethical approval applications to information sheets to participants, including details of the purpose of the study. Within the appendices the researcher has included a reflexive account of their experiences during the completion of this study (Please see Appendix. 1). This is based on a diary of voice recorded reflections which were completed at various points on the journey of completing this study.

### ***Impact and importance***

The researcher believes that the current research has contributed to a relative gap in research concerning the experiences of teachers who are working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse. In the UK context, two previous studies have sought to achieve this. Significantly, the researcher understands that this is the first study within the UK context to utilise a qualitative approach entirely: focussing the entirety of subsequent findings on the voice of the participants. This is with the acknowledged acceptance that they have approached these findings as a researcher in a subjective and interpretivist manner. The development of a model which evidences the participant's identified position on what effective support available to them should include when working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse has enabled a practical application of the findings to both the teaching profession (and Senior Leadership Teams) and the profession of Educational Psychology. The research also endeavours to consider the wider implications of the findings to the EP profession.

## **5.7 Concluding Comments**

Domestic abuse as a phenomenon has and continues to impact upon the lives of many children, young people and their families. Exposure to this abuse within the home environment can cause long term emotional impact in children and young people and can affect their day to day interaction with experiences such as school. Legislation and Policy has recognised the significance of this societal issue and as such professionals working with children and young people including Teachers and Educational Psychologists have a responsibility to safeguard and support individuals.

This small-scale, IPA study explored the experiences of teachers working with children and young people exposed to this phenomenon and was conducted within the context of a large, rural Local Authority with an established Educational Psychology service. The study sits within the UK context and acknowledges the specific socio-political context of the current climate as impacting upon the data gathered.

Existing literature pertinent to the topic was examined and a relative gap in the literature was identified. Previous research had considered the experiences of teachers working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse in the form of two studies completed by Ellis (Ellis, 2012; 2018). Ellis' (2012; 2018) research did not utilise a purely qualitative approach, and remain the only research conducted in the UK to focus on this area of interest (Ellis, 2012; 2018). Although it is accepted that qualitative research findings cannot be considered generalizable, this research sought to contribute to the relative paucity of research with the hope of 1) focussing solely on the qualitative experiences of the teachers involved and 2) contributing to the possibility of the 'vertical generalisation' (Johnson, 1997) of existing research findings.

The findings of this research have illuminated the experiences of teachers working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse within a specific socio-political context. The narratives of the six teachers were upheld and presented, before the four overarching themes of *Emotional Impact, Strategies for Support, Relationships, and Current Context* were presented and discussed. Teachers seated their experiences of working in this area as being directly impacted by their perceptions of the restrictions that the current context of their working environment hold. They seemed to accept that the responsibility of working with children and young people exposed to domestic abuse would result in emotional impact for themselves. They identified strategies of support that enabled them to feel alleviated of some of this impact: particularly in the form of 'containing' relationships with trusted colleagues. EPs were discussed as offering the profession support in these matters through positive training experiences as well as the possibility of the profession offering supervision: if funding were available to access this.

A possible model of working was developed as a result of teachers' experiences of what effective support in this area could look like: mirroring the support they noted as offered to young people in their care. The research holds implications for the teaching profession, and the Senior Leadership Teams who manage settings and staff, as well as the profession of Educational Psychology. Additionally, an information leaflet was developed to support the raising of the importance of this issue within the profession of Educational Psychology.

To conclude, the researcher offers a reflexive account of their experiences of completing the research, fitting with their methodological approach (Please see Appendix. 1).

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## **7. Appendices**

### **Appendix 1. Reflexive Account**

Throughout this study I have noted the importance of acknowledging my subjective position as research so that I can manage reflexivity. It is important to acknowledge both my personal and professional backgrounds to contribute to this. These undoubtedly influence my values and beliefs that I uphold regarding the significance of this research topic and the issue of Domestic Abuse as a phenomenon.

My growing interest in psychology developed prior to starting my undergraduate degree. Whilst completing A-level English Literature what appeared to interest me most throughout a wide range of historical texts was the seemingly consistent human nature and characterisation of protagonists. I then completed a joint degree in English Literature and Psychology as an undergraduate. I had a keen interest in Education from a young age, as both parents were teachers and it seemed that the profession of Educational Psychology aligned well with both my interests and my social values. I first qualified in Early Years, as it felt that this area of education afforded me the chance to apply the most psychology practically. As an early years SENCo of a large nursery chain, it struck me how complex the families that the team supported. The area I supported had high instances of Domestic Abuse and this appeared to be normalised amongst families. I was often in a position where I felt high levels of concern for children and was not often able to access wider support.

As mentioned within the context of my interest in this area of research, as actively involved in the formulations of findings, I must acknowledge my position as a researcher who identifies as having experienced domestic abuse. I feel that this experience led me to focus and understand patterns of behaviours that indicate concern in more depth. Whilst this was not an area I always felt able to support others when working in previous roles, it remained an area of interest where I hoped to affect wider systemic change and feel that this was most likely to be best achieved through raising awareness of the significance of the issue, and to fight against the concept of 'normalisation'.

During year 1 of my training programme on the D.Ed.Psych course a unit assessment focussed on the importance of raising awareness for vulnerable children and exposure to domestic abuse was the category I was able to work with a colleague towards. This work prompted the focus of the possibility of the phenomenon being the focus for my thesis. This was further emphasised when personal and professional experiences on work placements indicated a significant need for the teaching profession receiving recognition for the emotional impact that their work results in.

Significantly during research to contribute to the above I noted the paucity of the research concerning teachers experiences of working in this area and was interested in investigating further.

Above I outlined the rationale behind hoping to hear teachers' experiences of working with children exposed to domestic abuse. I will now consider how the research has impacted upon my developing practice as a TEP. Firstly, as a researcher I was aware of becoming too closely aligned with participants as I did not wish to establish an in-depth therapeutic relationship which then could not be maintained or continued within the confines of my role as researcher. However, it became clear that in talking about the topic of domestic abuse, participants were likely to draw on their own understandings and experiences with the topic. This meant the providing of signposting to materials or services that could offer wider support if necessary, became paramount. In day to day practice I now carry various leaflets signposting where support can be accessed as the phenomenon appears to be increasingly evident, not only in casework, but through the establishment of positive working relationships with school staff. Significantly, my focus on staff wellbeing has also strengthened in professional practice and I contributed to a wider service development group aiming to strengthen the EP Service's traded offer of supervision. Positive examples of settings where a focus on the culture of support for all has strengthened my resolve to be able to affect wider systemic change, as other EPs in the service where I am placed have achieved.

I will conclude this reflexive account by noting that what was once an area of interest, is now a passion both in regard to effecting systemic change 1) for the wider recognition of the significance of the issue of Domestic Abuse for all and 2) for the necessity of the recognition that teachers are a frontline service that warrant the consideration of their own wellbeing as being embedded in wider practice: not just received by the 'lucky'.

## Appendix 2. Literature Search Strategy

1. PsycINFO search (last conducted on 20.11.19)

Search terminology	Results
<b>1. Teachers*</b>	<b>168667</b>
<b>2. Teachers or Educators</b>	<b>194782</b>
<b>3. Teachers or Educators or School Staff</b>	<b>196061</b>
<b>4. Domestic Violence</b>	<b>16280</b>
<b>5. Domestic Violence or Domestic Abuse</b>	<b>16470</b>
<b>6. Domestic violence or Domestic abuse or Intimate partner violence</b>	<b>25085</b>
<b>7. domestic violence or domestic abuse or intimate partner violence or partner violence or spousal abuse</b>	<b>25416</b>
<b>8. Combine 3 with 7 using 'AND'</b>	<b>347</b>
<b>9. Restrict 8. to 2005-2019. English Language only</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>10. Restricted to peer reviewed only.</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>11. Papers remaining after exclusion (following abstract search for relevance)</b>	<b>13</b>

2. Combined database search: Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC), British Education Index and Child Development and Adolescent Studies (last conducted on 20/11/19)

Search terminology	Results
<b>1. Teachers*</b>	<b>610,811</b>
<b>2. Teachers or Educators</b>	<b>667,546</b>
<b>3. Teachers or Educators or School Staff</b>	<b>672,491</b>
<b>4. Domestic Violence</b>	<b>2,719</b>
<b>5. Domestic Violence or Domestic Abuse</b>	<b>2,847</b>
<b>6. Domestic violence or Domestic abuse or Intimate partner violence</b>	<b>3,849</b>
<b>7. domestic violence or domestic abuse or intimate partner violence or partner violence or spousal abuse</b>	<b>4,146</b>
<b>8. Combine 3 with 7 using 'AND' (do not apply equivalent subjects)</b>	<b>231</b>
<b>9. Restrict 8. to 2005-2019. English Language only</b>	<b>112</b>
<b>10. Restricted to peer reviewed only.</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>11. EBSCO removes exact duplicates across 3 Databases (completed at p.3 of working through 83 provided by 10.)</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>12. Papers remaining after exclusion (following abstract search for relevance)</b>	<b>17</b>

3. EThOS search (e-theses online service from the British Library) (last conducted on 20.11.19)

Search terms	Results
<b>1. Teacher AND Domestic Violence</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>2. Papers remaining after exclusion (following abstract search for relevance)</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3. Educational Psychology AND Domestic Violence</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>4. Papers remaining after exclusion (following abstract search for relevance)</b>	<b>2 (1 as from 2. above)</b>

### Appendix 3. Example of Excel Spreadsheet for Reviewing Literature.

LIT REVIEW - Saved											
Poppy Dalton											
File Home Insert Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Help											
AutoSave Off											
Clipboard Font Paragraph Styles Cells Editing Ideas Sensitivity											
A1											
Author	Year	Title	Journal	National	Methodology	Key points	Relevance for Thesis & Critique	CASP Criteria			
Bennett	2007	Creating a School Community for Learning	The New Educator	USA	anecdotal evaluation	Interesting but not relevant	Not to use	Not really me			
Ellis	2018	Containment and denial: raising awareness of unconscious	Educational Psych	UK	Questionnaires & Semi-s interviews	Follow on from 2012 study. Psychoanalytical frameworks used. Lit review indicates no focus on specific USA Curriculum training.	2nd study completed in UK context. Framework used removes ownership from participant voice.	Y			
Young et. al.	2016	Examining the long-term effects of a domestic violence training	Journal of Aggress	USA	Mixed Methods	Range of Participants not just teaching staff	Does not include exposure as part of requirement.	Majority Y			
Ellis	2012	The impact on teachers of supporting children exposed to	Educational & Child	UK	Questionnaires & Semi-s interviews	Seeks to gain experiences of teachers as part of research. Thematic analysis focus.	Key text, use but be aware that reads better when considered as 2-parter with subsequent 2018	Majority Y Some			
Munger & Markstrom	2018	"Recognition and identification of children in preschool and	Education Inquiry	Sweden	Focus groups & Semi-s interviews	Drawing on larger study by same authors- snowball thematic analysis, themes similar to two strand:	Use but add the larger study too. Similar context to UK system regarding policy and expectation	Y			
Alexander et.	2005	Raising the Issue of Domestic Abuse in School	Children & Society	UK	Facilitated disc. & Systematic Review content,	Very large scale study focussing on exposure Responses differed depending on exposure	Not useful for the topic regarding focus on yp as priority	Majority Y Some			
Turner et al.	2017	Interventions to Improve the Response of Professionals to Inter-Parental Violence: The Pre-Schooler's Perspective	Child Abuse Review	UK	Systematic Review content,	Very clear system used and interesting subsequent framework developed for unders	Not useful for the review?	Y			
Baker & Cunningham	2009	Schooler's Perspective	Early Childhood Ec	Canada	Clinical interviews	useful emphasis on importance of school, not important information included, financial impact raised, preventative education focus	Useful for understanding of effect on cyp: no reflection on effect on of adult responsibility	Majority Y Some			
McKee & Mason	2015	Domestic violence and abuse prevention programmes in the	Pastoral Care in Education	UK	?? Not noted, article	10 practical strategies backed up by research.	Important points, possibly refer to but not main focus	most Y			
Lelli	2014	10 Strategies to Help the Traumatized Child in	Kappa Delta Pi Rec	USA	??? Article	Useful for practice but not relevant for study differences between profession perspectives	Do not include: not relevant for purpose and USA specific	Not really me			
Byrne & Tavor	2007	Children at Risk from Domestic Violence and their Educational	Child Care in Practice	UK	Semi-s interviews on what constitutes referral: all practicing	Relevant for gaining perspectives in this area: focus on teachers as part of participants so criteria	Y	Y			

#### Appendix 4. Example of Critical Appraisal of literature as informed by CASP guidelines.

**Paper for appraisal and reference:** Ellis, G. (2012) 'The impact on teachers of supporting children exposed to domestic abuse', *Educational and Child Psychology*, Vol. 29, No. 4, pp.109-120.

**1. Was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?**

Y N Uncertain

*Clear research questions outlined but these do not necessarily 'fit' with the identified gap in lit review presented (further discussed in no. 3). Focussing on the training element of the review as a priority in RQ1. Acknowledges that exposure impacts on child development and that means teachers need awareness of this (fitting with training focus). 3rd RQ identified attempt to tie these 2 distinct issues together.*

**2. Is a qualitative methodology appropriate?**

Y N Uncertain

*Yes, for the aim of collecting and comparing perspectives, but this is not the entire focus for the work. Feel this could have been managed by solely focussing on qualitative data, perhaps my own preference guiding this. Consider issues of agency for participants and researcher's focus on training evaluation as a priority for the work?*

**3. Was the research design appropriate to address the aims of the research?**

Y N Uncertain

*Clarity of purpose of research: focussing on training evaluation (specifically increasing confidence in identification and management) as well as hearing perspectives. 8 interviews conducted as a result of 165 returned questionnaires. Uncertain how this selection and reduction was approached. Consider the agency issue as noted above. Reducing qualitative information to data may reduce agency. However, researcher is clear with RQs that focus is not solely on hearing individual perspectives. Also lit review focusses on gap in hearing perspectives so does quantitative element focussing on training confidence levels 'fit' with this basis of work or is this based on alternative agenda?*

**4. Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research?**

Y N Uncertain

*Initial sampling is appropriate in this context. As noted above unsure how 8 of the 165 returned questionnaires were then approached to take part in interviews or how these were selected from available returns.*

**5. Was the data collected in a way that addressed the research issue?**

Y N Uncertain

*semi-structured interviews aim to add qualitative detail to initial questionnaire responses. The research issue appears to focus training impact (RQ1) however much of write up focusses on qualitative information as it's focus (Theme discussion takes priority).*

**6. Has the relationship between researcher and participants been adequately considered?**

Y      N      Uncertain

This does not appear to have been acknowledged or addressed in detail in this work. The researcher's epistemological and ontological positions are acknowledged in response to methodological decision making.

**7. Have ethical issues been taken into consideration?**

Y      N      Uncertain

*This is not discussed in this article, perhaps in response to word limitations of article. No discrete section available. Researcher acknowledges potential trauma of teachers working in this area, and responsibility of wider services (EPs. Government etc) to recognise and respond to this.*

**8. Was the data analysis sufficiently rigorous?**

Y      N      Uncertain

*Quantitative information provided in brief table. Thematic analysis focussed on and widely discussed. Feel most interesting and informative findings stem from qualitative analysis.*

**9. Is there a clear statement of findings?**

Y      N      Uncertain

*Themes summarised and focus of findings appears to be qualitative data as a priority. Questionnaire information filtered into these discussions rather than discrete section (possibly due to article length restrictions. Discussion draws together the findings in relation to psychological theory and does so in a way that answers the research questions. I would argue main focus is on responding to RQ2.*

**10. How valuable is the research?**

Y      N      Uncertain

*Original contribution. Feel that the lit review offers a clear gap in the literature to focus on gathering perspectives of teachers working in this area: which could have been achieved without the quantitative inclusion of RQ1. Feel that the focus of the work switches between priorities of training evaluation for specific individual local authority but the most useful work/research that informs themes and implications for future research lies in the qualitative data of the interviews. Valuable as a jumping off point to this area of working and likely to be hindered by article length restrictions? NB: second article by Ellis (2018) includes much more context for this research (researcher position etc) than actually recorded within this article.*

## Appendix 5. Participant Information Sheet



8 Priory Road, Bristol, BS8 1TZ

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### **Hearing Teachers experiences of working with pupils who are exposed to Domestic Abuse**

#### **Participant Information Sheet**

- **What is the purpose of the study?**

The aim of the study is to hear the experiences of Teachers who are working with pupils witnessing Domestic Abuse (DA) and managing emotionally sensitive information concerning this. DA as a problem poses significant economic strain on public services, including social care and health (Gallagher, 2014; McKee & Mason, 2015). It is recognised as a problem that is international, and exists in all social groups regardless of class and race (Dodd, 2009). Current statistics indicate that as many as 1 in 3 women will experience or have experienced some form of Domestic Violence within an intimate partner relationship (Humphreys & Mullender, 2002). The Home Office estimated in 2009 that half of adults who have experienced or are experiencing DA live with children under 16 (Home Office, 2009). In 2002 it was estimated that around 750,000 children are exposed to DA in the UK alone (Department of Health, 2002) with Meltzer and colleagues (2009) equating this to average that in every UK classroom at least one child will be witnessing domestic abuse at home (Meltzer, Doos, Vostanis & Goodman, 2009). Research has consistently evidenced that schools are in the best position to support children and young people who have experienced or are witnessing DA (Alexander, Macdonald & Paton, 2005; Dustin & Shepherd, 2013). This is of particular importance considering studies which have sought young people's views on this issue confirm this (Fox, Hale & Gadd, 2014). Young people are voicing that school is often the "best place" to explore issues safely (Humphreys & Mullender, 2002, p.23).

The above information highlights the importance of this issue to the profession of Educational Psychology.

I aim to complete this research by conducting semi-structured interviews with individual teachers to gain a better understanding of the impact that this responsibility of their role may have on their emotional well-being. I am hoping the information gathered will help the Educational Psychology Service identify and develop packages of support that could be offered to professionals such as yourselves in the future. Crucially, it gives Teachers a chance to voice their feelings about an important and increasing responsibility of their role.

- **Why have I been chosen?**



You have been approached to take part in this research as your school's Educational Psychologist felt this research may be of interest to you. Your Head Teacher has been contacted previously and has agreed they would be happy for their teaching staff to participate.

- **What will happen if I take part?**

If you agree to participate in this research, you will be asked to take part in an interview with myself, Poppy Dalton, a Trainee Educational Psychologist studying at the University of Bristol and working in the [REDACTED] Educational Psychology Service. Your decision to take part in the research will be confidential, unless you choose to share this with others personally. The interview will be arranged at a time and place that is most convenient for you and will be in a space where we will be able to talk confidentially. The interview will take up to an hour but will not be limited to this if you would like more time. We will include time at the start of the session to talk through the purposes of the study, expectations for the session, confidentiality and consent procedures; give time for any questions regarding the research and interview; and a debriefing session at the end. The interview will be semi-structured and will focus on your experiences of working with this issue. You will not be expected to discuss individual cases. The session will be recorded and saved on a secure data storage at the University of Bristol. The recording will be transcribed, analysed, and reported. All data will be anonymised and information that may identify individuals will be omitted. All Data management is in line with the General Data Protection Regulations & Data Protection 2018 and adheres to the guidelines stipulated by [REDACTED] Research Governance Framework. You have the right to withdraw from this study without explanation up until the date of publication. The deadline for this withdrawal is to safeguard the research to remain valid as an ethical piece of work. The resulting report will need to be submitted according to an externally verified deadline for me to complete my qualification in Educational Psychology. Should the withdrawal deadline not be in place and a participant requests to withdraw this will prevent my completion of the qualification the research is in evidence of.

You will have the opportunity to discuss the content if you would like before the report is finalised and consent for the researcher to contact you in the future to arrange this will be sought. The final report will be shared with the Principal and Senior Educational Psychologists of [REDACTED] Educational Psychology service and submitted as my Thesis towards my doctorate qualification. A summary report of the findings will be made available on [REDACTED] Research Governance Framework website and the School of Policy Studies at University of Bristol website.

Should you experience distress whilst engaging in this study, signposting for future support will be provided as an appendix to this information sheet. If this is the case, the interview will be paused, with no expectation to continue if you feel unable to. Similarly if a disclosure is made due to human error, the interview will be stopped, deleted and started again, should you feel able to. The researcher will then adhere to policy, following up the disclosure, as outlined in the 'Limits of confidentiality' section below.

- **What will happen if I don't take part?**

There is no obligation to take part in the study. Who has been approached to be a participant will only be known by the researcher and your school's EP and will remain confidential unless you choose to share this with others personally. If you choose to participate and later decide you do not wish to remain part of the research, you will be able to withdraw from the study up to the date of publication. The deadline for this withdrawal is to safeguard the research in remaining valid as an ethical document. This will need to be submitted according to a specified deadline for me to complete my qualification in Educational Psychology. Should the deadline not be in place and a participant requests to withdraw this will prevent completion of the qualification.

- **Anonymisation**

We will ask you not to use the names of individuals, other professionals or colleagues. The structure of the interview will focus on your experiences of working with this issue. You will not be expected to discuss individual cases. This will safeguard against breach of confidentiality. If issues discussed are felt that they risk disclosing the identity of individuals then they will be omitted from the data. Any information used for the purposes of illustration within the final document will focus on your personal experience, and not illustrative examples you may use. Your name or school will not be included in any reports or transcripts created.

- **Limits of confidentiality**

All data obtained through this study will be anonymised and treated with confidentiality. However, there are limits to this confidentiality. For example in the event information is given relating to an illegal activity, it will not be possible to maintain confidentiality and the correct safeguarding procedures will take place according to [REDACTED] safeguarding policy. Similarly any information shared that highlights a safeguarding concern where correct procedure has not been managed according to [REDACTED] policy will be acted upon according to the above named policy and a referral to the [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] [REDACTED] may be required. All data will adhere to the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations & Data Protection 2018.

- **Complaints**

Should you wish to make a complaint, please contact the Supervisor of this research, Dr John Franey [John.Franey@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:John.Franey@bristol.ac.uk).

- **What will my information be used for?**

The information you provide will be used to identify common themes of the experiences of Teachers in this matter. I am hoping the information gathered will help the Educational Psychology Service identify and develop packages of support that could be offered to professionals such as yourselves in the future. I intend the study will contribute to an awareness of the importance of Teacher emotional well-being. The University of Bristol operate a "Research Data Management and Open Data Policy" in line with the Research Council UK Common Principles on Data Policy which can be found at <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/research/environment/governance/research-data-policy/>. This is in adherence to the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations & Data Protection 2018.

For further information, please contact Poppy Dalton [Poppy.Dalton@pd16306@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:Poppy.Dalton@pd16306@bristol.ac.uk), or Dr John Franey [John.Franey@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:John.Franey@bristol.ac.uk),

Ethical approval has been given by the School for Policy Studies Ethics Committee and [REDACTED] Research Governance Framework for the above research.

## Appendix 6. Participant Consent Form



8 Priory Road, Bristol, BS8 1TZ

T: +44 (0) 117 954 6755

F: +44 (0) 117 954 6756

W: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/Depts/SPS>

### Hearing Teachers experiences of working with pupils who are exposed to Domestic Abuse

#### Participant Consent Form

Please read the following statements and tick all to confirm consent:

	Please Tick
I confirm that I have received, read and understand the Participant Information Sheet provided on the above-named study. Based on the information provided, I am happy to take part in this research study.	
I understand that I consent to a further contact by the researcher in the future to offer receiving feedback of research findings before they are finalised.	
I understand the research is confidential, and the limits to confidentiality have been made clear to me. I have received a copy of the confidentiality protocol for the study. I understand that information relating to illegal activity, or harm to others, will be passed to the appropriate authority.	
I understand my participation in this study will remain confidential. I understand that I can withdraw my participation from the research up to the point of publication, and have been informed why this deadline is necessary	
I am happy for my interview to be digitally recorded, and understand that this will be transcribed, analysed and reported. I will be given the opportunity to discuss the findings prior to it being finalised should I choose to take it. I understand the study will adhere to the General Data Protection Regulations & Data Protection 2018	
I understand that all data will be anonymised and any information that may identify individuals will be omitted. I understand that data will be stored securely on an appropriate storage facility after completion of the research study and then destroyed according to [REDACTED] Destruction Policy and the University of Bristol's Research Data Management and Open Data Policy. Both adhere to the General Data Protection Regulations & Data Protection 2018	
I have had the opportunity to discuss any areas of concern with the researcher and the Research supervisor. On this basis, give my consent to participate in the study named above.	

I have read the above and confirm consent to participate in the afore named study:

Name: .....

Signature: ..... Date:.....

Please return the completed form to the following email address: [Poppy.Dalton@\[REDACTED\]](mailto:Poppy.Dalton@[REDACTED])

## Appendix 7. Confidentiality Protocol



8 Priory Road, Bristol, BS8 1TZ

T: +44 (0) 117 954 6755

F: +44 (0) 117 954 6756

W: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/Depts/SPS>

### **Hearing Teachers experiences of working with pupils who are exposed to Domestic Abuse**

#### **Confidentiality Protocol**

This research aims to hear the experiences of Teachers who are working with pupils exposed to Domestic Abuse (DA) and managing emotionally sensitive information concerning this. Participants will not be directly asked about individual cases or expected to discuss these. However, it may be that participants choose to share experiences of particular cases to illustrate points or as an explanation for content mentioned.

All data obtained through this study will be anonymised and treated with confidentiality. However, there are limits to this confidentiality. Should information be given relating to an illegal activity, or to individuals being harmed, it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality.

Should the above take place issues of concern will be discussed with the research supervisor, Dr John Franey, as soon as possible to obtain advice or direction. The appropriate authority may need to be informed.

The researcher will make every attempt to discuss this with participants and alert them in the event this needs to happen. This may not always be possible. The researcher is required to pass the information on.

In addition, participants are asked not to use names of children, other professionals, or colleagues during interviews to protect anonymity and confidentiality. Should a name be used in error this will be omitted from the data. Although names will not be included, some information may identify individuals. This will be omitted from the data.

By agreeing to participate in this research, you agree to be bound by the terms of this confidentiality protocol and accept that the information you share will be treated in the manner outlined above.

## Appendix 8. Letter to Head Teacher (Gate keeper)



8 Priory Road, Bristol, BS8 1TZ

T: +44 (0) 117 954 6755

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W: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/Depts/SPS>

### **Hearing Teachers experiences of working with pupils who have experienced Domestic Violence and Abuse**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank-you for taking the time to read this letter. My name is Poppy Dalton and I am currently in my second year of training on the Doctorate qualification for Educational Psychology at Bristol University. I am currently working for [REDACTED] in my capacity as a Trainee Educational Psychologist.

I am undertaking a research project to contribute to my doctorate qualification. The purpose of this research is to hear the experiences of Teachers when working with pupils who have experienced Domestic Violence and Abuse and manage emotionally sensitive information concerning this. I aim to do this by interviewing teachers to gain a better understanding of the impact that this responsibility of their role may have on their emotional well-being. I hope that Teachers' experiences will offer insight into the development of a package of support to be offered in the future. You have been approached to take part in this research as your school's Educational Psychologist felt this study may be of interest to you and your team. I would very much like to seek permission for your school to be involved. If you agree to participate, this would mean that members of your team may be contacted directly to ask them if they would be happy to participate. The interviews would focus on gaining Teachers views on their experiences of this aspect of their work, not concerning individual cases or safeguarding concerns.

Each interview is expected to last around an hour and will be recorded with an encrypted digital voice recorder. They will then be transcribed, analysed and the results will be written up. All participants will be offered the opportunity to view the data analysis before the write up is finalised to ensure they are happy with the content. Any identifying information will be removed and schools and participants will remain anonymous. I have attached a copy of the confidentiality protocol for this research for your information as well as a copy of the Participant Information Sheet.

Taking part in this research may help the Educational Psychology Service better understand the experiences of teachers working with and managing emotionally sensitive information regularly. Hearing directly from teachers will offer the service the opportunity to reflect on programmes of support which could be built upon in the future. Crucially, it gives Teachers a chance to voice their feelings about an important and increasing responsibility of their role.

If you are happy for your staff to participate, to fulfil my ethical obligations I will be seeking fully informed consent from yourself, and subsequently members of your team.

Enclosed is the consent form for your permission for me to contact members of your teaching staff, who I will approach to see if they would. I hope to manage data collection between November 2018 and January 2019. I would like to reiterate that participation is voluntary, and any data collected will be confidential and anonymised and adhere to the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations & Data Protection 2018. Anyone involved in the research will have the right to withdraw up to the point of publication without explanation.

Please read and sign if you are happy to participate. If you would like to discuss the project further, please feel free to contact either of us, or Dr John Franey, Senior Teaching Fellow and Research supervisor at the University of Bristol.

Thank-you in anticipation, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Kind regards,

Poppy Dalton

[pd16306@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:pd16306@bristol.ac.uk)

Dr John Franey

[John.Franey@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:John.Franey@bristol.ac.uk)

## Appendix 9. Head Teacher Consent Form



8 Priory Road, Bristol, BS8 1TZ

T: +44 (0) 117 954 6755

F: +44 (0) 117 954 6756

W: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/Depts/SPS>

### **Hearing Teachers experiences of working with pupils who are exposed to Domestic Abuse Head Teacher Consent Form**

**By signing below, I give permission/ agree that:**

1. My staff may be contacted to participate in the research project which aims to hear the experiences of teachers working with pupils exposed to Domestic Abuse.
2. I have been given the information sheet summarising what the interview will entail and the process for obtaining consent from potential participants.
3. I understand the information provided
4. I have received a copy of the confidentiality protocol for the study
5. I have been provided with contact details for the researcher and their supervisor allowing me to seek clarification on any areas of concern.
6. I understand all information collected will be confidential and anonymised and adheres to the Data Protection Act and General Data Protection Regulations & Data Protection 2018.
7. I understand that participants can withdraw from the study up to the point of publication without explanation.

**If you agree with all of the above and are happy for staff to be contacted regarding participation in the study, please sign below and return a copy to one of the above email addresses.**

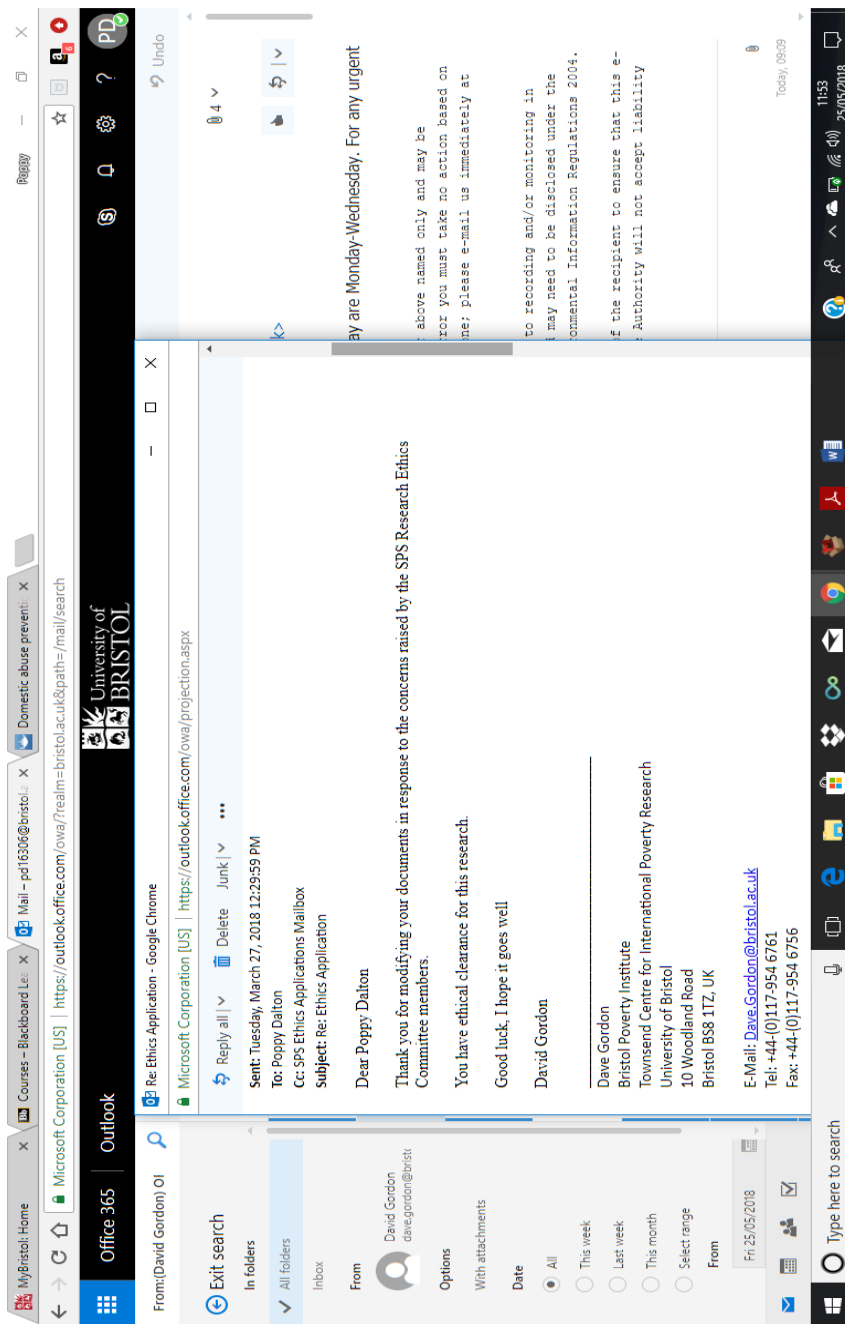
**Head Teacher Name (Printed).....**

**Setting Name:.....**

**Signature ..... Date:.....**

## Appendix 10. Ethical Approval from University of Bristol, School for Policy Studies Ethics Committee

Received: 27.03.2018





## Appendix 11. Ethical Approval from the Local Authority Research Governance Panel

Poppy Dalton

Date 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2018

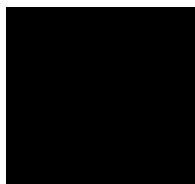
Dear Poppy

We are pleased to inform you that [REDACTED] Research Governance Panel has approved your research project 'Hearing Teachers' experiences of working with pupils who have experienced Domestic Abuse'.

When your research is complete would you please forward a copy of your executive summary to the Research Governance Framework Panel ([rgf@\[REDACTED\]](mailto:rgf@[REDACTED])). This is to ensure that your valuable research findings are shared (where appropriate) and to support good return on investment.

We hope that your research provides valuable information.

Yours sincerely,



**Rebecca** [REDACTED]  
Chair [REDACTED] Research Governance Panel

## **Appendix 12. Interview Schedule**

### **Research Questions to be addressed:**

- 5) What are the experiences of Teachers who are working with children who it is believed are exposed to Domestic Abuse?
- 6) How do Teachers manage emotionally sensitive information in relation to these pupils?
- 7) Do Teachers perceive Educational Psychologists as being professionals that would be able to offer support in these matters?
- 8) Do Teachers identify how they could be supported when working with children exposed to domestic abuse?

### **Schedule:**

Starting the conversation:

1. Introductions and clarifying consent, sharing confidentiality protocol again.
2. Recorder on
3. Rapport building, thanking for time etc. General conversation such as weather, how has your day been so far, small talk based on previous relationship and knowledge if any.
4. Explaining the research context to ensure understanding. Encouraging participant to be as open as they are comfortable with.

Prompts:

- Can you think of a time....
- What was that like for you?
- How does/did that make you feel?
- What do you think the impact of that is?
- You mentioned.....
- I was wondering if.....
- One of the things I found difficult was..... (for connection and harder questioning)

Closing the interview:

- I don't have any more questions to ask. Thank you for your time. Is there anything that we have not covered that you feel it is important to share?
- Summarise the conversation for clarification.
- Thank participant again, letting them know that they can contact me again if they wish to add anymore.
- Ask them if they would like any booklets on supporting wellbeing.

Research Questions to be answered	Semi-Structured Interview Questioning to prompt response
1) What are the experiences of Teachers who are working with children who it is believed are exposed to Domestic Abuse?	<p>Can you think of a time when you were working with a pupil who you felt was witnessing DV at home?</p> <p>What did you do? What did you say? Who to? How did you feel?</p> <p>What was the impact of that work on you?</p>
2) How do Teachers manage emotionally sensitive information in relation to these pupils?	<p>What did you do with that information? What did you do with those feelings? What was the outcome of that work?</p>
3) Do Teachers perceive Educational Psychologists as being professionals that would be able to offer support in these matters?	<p>Was an EP involved? Do you think an EP being involved was/would have been helpful?</p> <p>How do you think an EP might be helpful in the future?</p>
4) Do Teachers identify how they could be supported when working with children exposed to domestic abuse?	<p>How would you have wanted to be supported? Do you have access to supervision/Are you aware of supervision models?</p> <p>How is your wellbeing supported at work? How do you manage your wellbeing?</p>

## Appendix 13. Table of Overarching Themes

Participant	Themes Identified					
Quinn	Relationships with Young People	Feeling Concern v Evidence	Emotional Impact	Professional Relationships	Strategies for Support	Current context
Frankie	Relationships with Young People	Feeling Concern v Evidence	Emotional Impact	Professional Relationships	Strategies for Emotional Support	Current context
Rowan	Relationships with Young People	Strategies for Support	Emotional Impact	Protecting wellbeing	Relationships with Colleagues	Current context
Riley	Knowledge & Understanding	Emotional Impact	Team Working	Strategies for Emotional support	What Support looks like	Current context
Bobby	Relationships with Young People & Families	Emotional Impact	Reality of Referral	Multi-agency Working	Strategies for Support	Current context
Charlie	Relationships with Young People & Families	Emotional Impact	Multi-agency Working	Team Relationships	Strategies for support	Current context

### Themes to consider:

Emotional Impact

Strategies for Support

Relationships: YP & Team/colleagues

Current context

## Appendix 14. Participants Individual Tables of Themes (examples of stage 4 of Analysis)

### 1. Quinn's Table of Themes

Themes	Super-ordinate Themes	Quotes that evidence	Page/line #
<b>Relationships with Young People</b>	<b>Knowing YP</b> (Individuals)	<i>"I think we then get into that next layer of when ... we get ... young people behaving aggressively, attachment difficulties, or... an inability to demonstrate pro-social behaviours ...then that's always at the back of your mind. What are the drivers of that?"</i>	3/68-77
	Communication	<i>"whilst [yp] was with us [they] got more heavily involved in that, lots of risk-taking behaviours ...I think that there's an awful lot more to look at and I'm, I'm asking questions"</i>	5/156-160
	<b>Behaviour as communication</b>	<i>"..and they've probably thought through the process of, 'actually, that's just what happens in our family but I know I shouldn't tell anybody about it".</i>	2/36-37
	SEMH Presentation Safe relationships Control and secrecy Experience PBE/EBP History Knowledge of area Knowledge of community Knowledge of school culture <b>Patterns of behaviour</b>	<i>"how do we pick them up, identify them and all the rest of it ... we are getting reams and reams and reams of kids coming through, umm ... with anxiety, emotional difficulty, self-harming"</i>	3/98-100
<b>Feeling Concern v Evidence</b>	Categorisation	<i>"I've only had out of, something like 600 referrals this academic year...only 7 of those have been self-referred in relation to domestic abuse, domestic violence."</i>	2/59-62
	Thresholds for levels of need	<i>"... what we actually know... then that's always at the back of your mind, is ...what are the drivers of that?"</i>	2/66-3/77
	<b>Factual evidence</b>	<i>"we're waiting for a disclosure, we're waiting for...a disclosure....w-we don't often get them from those sorts of kids"</i>	7/229-233
	Feelings/sense	<i>"I think that there's an awful lot more to look at and I'm, I'm asking questions"</i>	5/159-160
	High levels of need	<i>"and the things that [yp] hasn't said about what's gone on at home... yeah, I'd put, you know...a-a good few, good few pounds on the fact that, you know that one door to be disclosed, it's not the only one"</i>	9/269-274
	High levels of concern Low self-report repetition Knowing Suspicion <b>Expectation</b> Experience PBE EBP <b>Waiting</b>	<i>"we had five things logged. Low... I'll...use the word low ...but not referable level."</i>	8/238-244



	<p>Compromising Hands tied Training Sharing knowledge Wants v achievable: Hopes v dreams <b>Setting limits</b></p>	<p><i>they feel safe, from a safeguarding perspective and emotionally held"</i>  <i>"all we can do is just say, 'we've done everything that we can'"</i>  <i>"I've got bad before and just worked myself into the ground...I now have a ... rule ... agreement with my [partner]... you've got to be able to rationalise... 'd'you know what, I've done sixty hours, that's enough'"</i>  <i>"I'd already talked to [EP name] and [EP name] as a work plan for this year, that we were going to introduce some supervision..."</i></p>	<p>18/589-590 20/655-671  18/605-606</p>
<b>Current context</b>	<p><b>Funding limitations</b> Competition Financial <b>resources</b> Compromising Experience Changing agendas Wider systemic issue <b>Increased expectations</b></p>	<p><i>"a lot of people who end up in education do so because they've got that sort of underlying, caring,...want to support people and you come through a system where... you have to work hard...if you're not meeting the standard then you work harder..... that is very much the culture within education"</i>  <i>"you just, yeah, you just keep going ... and you keep going ...put that in the context of... the financial climate...Then it makes it...even harder"</i>  <i>"last year I didn't have any money to do it [supervision]. This year, we've used some of our [LA specific] funding...to try and get something up and running with [EP name]... but, we've got a deficit next year...I'm not gonna be able to spend"</i>  <i>"you just work harder [deep breath] they squeeze and squeeze and squeeze, there's nothing else to give now...and it is harder and harder to do even, even the little stuff so ... y-what the sorts of the conversations round the photocopier, the just stopping and chatting to someone and coz you... nobody's got time...to just chat to colleagues"</i></p>	<p>21/685-693      21/695-698  21/702-709  23/757-764</p>

## 2. Frankie's Table of Themes

Themes	Super-ordinate Themes	Quotes that evidence	Page/line #
<b>Relationships with Young People</b>	Knowing Individuals	<i>"[young person] had seen some sort, some sort, sort of fairly tr-traum-traumatic events in his life..."</i>	1/15-16
	Communication	<i>umm.....obviously just completely just fell apart"</i>	
	Behaviour as communication	<i>"when [yp] was leaving they gave me that, and they made that and I was quite like awww...clearly meant a lot to them"</i>	1/33-36
	SEMH	<i>"they'd go through this kind of strange cycle where every so often they would like really hate me ... was shouting at me... ... coz of what they'd seen between their mum and dad"</i>	2/46-48
	Patterns of Behaviour	<i>"they would go for like weeks of just, just despising me and then weeks of being fine with me"</i>	2/50-51
	Understanding theory	<i>"a lot of them have experienced trauma, it's always interesting looking at their response and how they deal with you"</i>	2/61-62
<b>Feeling Concern v Evidence</b>	Recognition of signs	<i>"I was talking with [them] about what [they] was going through"</i>	2/51-52
	Attachment figures		
	Control and secrecy		
	Experience		
<b>Emotional Impact</b>	PBE/EBP		
	Trauma		
	Time		
	Professional knowledge		
<b>Feeling Concern v Evidence</b>	Factual evidence	<i>"those are the ones where we knew things had happened and then we had some where ... you suspect but you don't know"</i>	2/62-63
	Feelings/sense	<i>"There should be really on the paperwork, there should be a kinda like a tick box that says like 'I've got a load of things'. It's like you need a tick box for like I've got a feeling..."</i>	2/70-71
	High levels of concern	<i>"there's no tick box for 'I've got a feeling'. So it is, it is frustrating"</i>	2/73
	Holding		
<b>Emotional Impact</b>	Accumulative	<i>"I became so...dulled to it. Ummm. And it does dull you...It just becomes.....yeah just one of those things."</i>	3/81-82
	Repetition	<i>"it's like everyone else is like their their their meter is set a lot lower than yours, yours has just been kind of gradually creeping up"</i>	3/84-85
	PBE	<i>"very intense and you know it burnt me out"</i>	3/97
	Numbness	<i>"Whether that's the right thing or not, I don't know ... It's the right thing for me ... the right thing for the kids..?"</i>	3/106-107
<b>Emotional Impact</b>	Pressure to protect		
	Guilt		
	Emotional Capacity		
	Personal experience of burnout		
<b>Emotional Impact</b>	Normalising from exposure		
	Caring profession		
	Thresholds of capacity		



		<p><i>"if you are conscientious, you need the soft bit a lot more than you need the hard bit ..."</i></p> <p><i>"Traumatising...I think is a good word"</i></p>	<p>5/177-178</p> <p>1/10-12</p>
<b>Professional Relationships</b>	<p>Awareness for others</p> <p>Shared responsibilities</p> <p><b>Team working</b></p> <p>Support from team</p> <p>No support for Team</p> <p>Sharing knowledge</p> <p>Staff <b>wellbeing</b></p> <p>Awareness of signs of stress and burnout</p> <p><b>Protection</b></p> <p>staff/Safeguarding</p>	<p><i>"Have they got the support that they need? No, I don't think that they have"</i></p> <p><i>"I do watch people and I think... I can see you're making mistakes that I you know I can see it becoming ... burnt out is the phrase"</i></p> <p><i>"my current line manager... does a lot of work with me and its, it's very handy'n helpful...has a very different background to me ... you need someone to show you what normal looks"</i></p> <p><i>"[YP] had a very.... overtly intense relationship with [staff member]. Which we were protecting, protecting [them] from, from that kind of thing".</i></p>	<p>4/109</p> <p>4/113-115</p> <p>5/180-184</p> <p>2/44-46</p>
<b>Strategies for Emotional Support</b>	<p>Taking control</p> <p>Protective strategies for wellbeing</p> <p>Sharing knowledge</p> <p>Different approaches</p> <p>Emotional support</p> <p><b>Empathy</b> needed</p> <p>Connection</p> <p>Therapeutic interventions</p> <p>Sharing</p> <p>Communication</p> <p><b>Space to talk</b></p> <p><b>Individual differences</b></p>	<p><i>"I overtly, deliberately, stay away from safeguarding....so part of my support structure is ah... I don't touch safeguarding"</i></p> <p><i>"it's that staff having a chance to offload ...and discuss and talk"</i></p> <p><i>"the EP team you know the EP team having the ability to give us someone to talk to ...and offload stuff and that's really important".</i></p> <p><i>"It needs to be the right team but there is the right way of burnin' off ...that, that, that ... that stress, you know"</i></p> <p><i>"I think it depends on the person. So some people are good at putting things into boxes... and putting the box on the shelf. I'm good at that..... e-e-even if you're good at putting things in the box 'n putting it on the shelf you still need someone to talk to".</i></p> <p><i>"I think part of it is just knowing that you have someone that you can talk to and it's not that they have all the answers ... oh my god that'd be amazing, it's about having someone ...who's just there and 'god I know yeah, it's shit yeah'...'I understand' you know, in your school. Someone to</i></p>	<p>3/97-100</p> <p>4/137-138</p> <p>4/140-143</p> <p>6/203-206</p> <p>6/213-219</p> <p>6/220-225</p>

		<i>hold your emotional sick bucket for you."</i>	
<b>Current context</b>	Funding	<i>"she paid for two psychodynamic therapists, and I was like how, how the hell do you afford that?"</i>	4/128-129
	Financial <b>resources</b>		
	Restrictions	<i>"they made 80 grand a year in charitable donations"</i>	4/135
	<b>Priorities</b>		
	Thresholds	<i>"we've got, you know we have got...less than no money"</i>	4/146
	Compromising		
	Changing agendas	<i>"services have been cut schools have taken on the brunt but schools haven't, schools support systems haven't risen up to actually...cope with that in terms of like... the staff have stepped up, but the actual system itself hasn't stepped up to support the staff who've stepped up, does that make sense?"</i>	5/165-168
	Wider systemic issue		
	Reduction in wider services		
	Increased expectations		
	<b>Increased responsibility</b>		
	Role changes	<i>"so yeah, so basically ..... we need more support, we haven't got it".</i>	6/208
	Multiple roles	<i>"it's just that support but again you know that, that, that's time...Time is money, you haven't got the money, we definitely haven't got time"</i>	7/229-232
		<i>"increasingly we are becoming social workers... [colleague name] is effectively a social worker, [colleague name] is effectively a social worker and they're dealing with significant problems on a daily basis".</i>	5/148-153

### 3. Rowan's Table of Themes

Themes	Super-ordinate Themes	Quotes that evidence	Page/line #
<b>Relationships with Young People</b>	<b>Trust</b>	<i>"that is just time...they have to really feel that it's going to be okay...it will be several sessions that you could actually build that trust"</i>	5/152-154
	SEMH		
	Relationship priority		
	Behaviour as <b>communication</b>	<i>"I've experienced loads of different sort of mental health traumas....um, ranging from just parents splitting up...through just the marriage failing, to obviously domestic violence"</i>	1/25-30
	Individual differences		
	Knowing YP		
	Sharing in a safe space		
	<b>Building over Time</b>	<i>"whatever the-the reasons are, it always come out in their behaviour."</i>	1/32
	Therapeutic process	<i>"self-esteem, is virtually non-existent. Um... so that usually is the biggest barrier for me."</i>	2/45-46
	Self-Image of YP	<i>"building that relationship first...that they can trust and is constant, that doesn't mean you can always be this all softy person but it's, they know those boundaries..."</i>	2/57-61
		<i>"but I had about four sessions with [them] and now I just... [they're] in in one of my clubs and I just... 'everything alright? Any worries? No-No'. And big smiley face."</i>	5/134-135
<b>Strategies for support</b>	<b>Practical</b> (application of <b>strategies</b> (for support)	<i>"we have our policies around that and our strategies here, um... which are very successful".</i>	3/86-87
	Experience= recognising change in services		
	Skilled staff as resource	<i>"with the different training now, because the [specific approach] was very airy-fairy, I did like [specific approach] but it was very aaahhh. Now with [LA specific approach] the format is slightly different is that you're... bit more direct... having the confidence to say that, has brought a lot more out."</i>	20/634-649
	<b>Different approaches</b>		
	<b>Skilling up YP</b>	<i>"name [finger click] the emotion. [Deep breath] Um... kind of that way the children uh... are mooore able to talk...which I feel so much happier with"</i>	21/658-661
	Having high expectations: Boundary setting		
	Labelling emotions to skill up disclosure		
	Time spent moving to disclosure		
<b>Emotional Impact</b>	<b>Hard</b> emotionally Worry	<i>"sometimes you get a sense, if you want to talk particularly about</i>	3/89-91

	<p>Emotional impact  <b>Feeling/</b> (v fact)  <b>Sense</b> things wrong  (No) <b>Needing evidence</b>  Accumulation of concern</p>	<p><i>domestic violence, sometimes they just can't help it, it does come out".</i>  <i>when you know you just [clicking her fingers] ooh what i... you know, I'm... something ...that's quite hard to carry with you"</i>  <i>"when [laughs] 's not actually that thing [loud and statemented] 'oh I saw a bruise'. Just say gosh, I get this feeling that, that something's...going on"</i>  <i>"Saying there's something...is just not right...but I cant tell you because they haven't told me....But that doesn't still mean that it's not there and it hasn't happened"</i>  <i>"the impact on myself though sometimes I...I do sometimes feel very tired...Very tired".</i></p>	<p>19/596-600</p> <p>19/604-609</p> <p>19/617-20/621</p> <p>17/533-536</p>
<b>Protecting Wellbeing</b>	<p>Outlining support  Strategies to relieve stress  <b>'Best they can'</b>  'Done enough'  Space to talk  Good enough  Safety as a priority: YP &amp; Staff <b>Keeping safe</b>  Practical Policy and procedures  Defining roles  <b>(reducing) roles</b>  Empathy and connection  Time to heal</p>	<p><i>"obviously for us as well, we have a big-big thing of kee... th... our main thing is keeping everyone safe."</i>  <i>"I wouldn't say any names but I'd just go and let off steam."</i>  <i>"I think... as long as we feel we've tried and we've done our best..."</i>  <i>"we can do lots... But um... if all of that is...met...but we still don't feel very happy...Then, we have to know we've done our best. ...because otherwise that, that is not good for our own mental health"</i>  <i>"my role has completely changed...I was still doing the both jobs... since the beginning of the year...I have done purely the emotional well-being of the school...But now the impact...is quite big"</i></p>	<p>3/78-79</p> <p>24/760</p> <p>25/816-817</p> <p>26/829-839</p> <p>17/538-553</p>
<b>Relationships with Colleagues</b>	<p><b>Trust</b> SLT (being listened to)  Positive relationships  Effective Team info sharing  Working together  Colleagues who understand/friendships  <b>Empathy</b> and connection  (EP) <b>affecting change</b>  EP support</p>	<p><i>"I feel confident enough and have a very good relationship...with um... [colleague name] to say, 'No I need to talk to you now'."</i>  <i>"they're on my side... If you see what I mean. They're they to say, 'oh go... you know, poor you"</i>  <i>"if anything is really bugging us that we need to talk and whoever you feel happy to talk with...We're...we-we-we're quite lucky yeah. We have a really good team".</i></p>	<p>23/736-738</p> <p>24/768-770</p> <p>34/1090-1095</p>

		<i>"the EP said uh, 'I just... I do not know how you are doing this' or 'I don't know how you're managing'... You know, 'how often do you get to talk to people' and actually I wasn't... and so that's why the change happened."</i>	28/892-903
<b>Current context</b>	Busy working day <b>Time as a resource</b> restricted Barriers for offering support Threshold of need Funding constraints Restrictions impacting outcomes <b>Limits</b> (of what school can achieve) <b>to school support</b> <b>Staff</b> (as a resource) <b>skills</b>	<i>"Because we can help and help and help and help, put everything we can in place for the day and then they have to go home...I'm not saying it's... it's um, useless... But it makes it [whispers] very much harder."</i>	16/500-507
		<i>"if you could put every child, sort of, that's seeing anything but it's... it doesn't... there isn't enough time."</i>	32/1017-1018
		<i>"it's not just the time that the teacher is taken out of class...then obviously that has to be covered. It's also... we have to buy into you now as well".</i>	32/1026-1028
		<i>"You do have a choice but I'd ...reeeeally like you to do this one, coz I've had all the training in this but also.....this kind of training is a lot and a lot more expensive...and I've been doing it for so long that I'm probably well practised and... so pleeease take that one"</i>	29/926-933

#### 4. Riley's Table of Themes

Themes	Super-ordinate Themes	Quotes that evidence	Page/line #
<b>Knowledge &amp; Understanding</b>	Communication	<i>"I guess it's a case of... sometimes their behaviours are almost sort o' e-e-explained...by what they've witnessed"</i>	1/11-13
	Behaviour as communication	<i>"this child shows incredible resilience and you, it... you would never have known."</i>	1/15-16
	Individual differences	<i>"then we just need to-to softly say that it's okay to be angry but it's not okay to-to-to lash out...or it's not okay to-to rip your work up, or it's not okay to-to throw a chair."</i>	2/40-42
	Triggers for reaction	<i>"So we often use this room, or we'll use outside because it's-it's an enc... safe enclosed space. Or, certain children have certain places that they'll go to"</i>	3/90-92
	Understanding theory	<i>"And we do know them very well...we're with them six a day, sometimes seven hours a day."</i>	6/181-183
<b>Emotional impact</b>	Recognition of signs		
	School as a safe space		
	Time spent together		
	Knowing YP		
<b>Emotional impact</b>	Fact v feeling	<i>"it has been made aware to me...that...that there's three children...that were actually witnessing..."</i>	1/6-9
	Uncertainty	<i>"I guess if it's... iff... if... if there's that feeling where it's repeated continually, maybe weekly or daily... and that we-we're concerned, then we... I mean I guess we just follow our school procedures"</i>	4/100-103
	Emotional Impact	<i>"we'd regularly say like we-we'll go to bed and we'll lie on our pillow and think-think about that child"</i>	5/144-145
	Feeling concern	<i>"you might go home 'n not have said it to anyone...at the dinner table, or you lie in bed and you think, actually no that-that's playing on my mind...and then... share it the next day."</i>	5/158-163
	High levels of concern	<i>"there's one... one little [yp] who on a Friday, or at a ha... before half-term [they] actually says, 'I want to come home with you'... [their] home life isn't a safe place...we think, wh...h... why, why cant we just take [them] home this once."</i>	8/237-261
<b>Emotional impact</b>	Holding		
	Accumulation of concern		
	Affecting home		
	life/comparison		
	Repetition		

		<i>"if there's 30 children in the class there's bound to be more that we're not aware of"</i>	15/475-476
<b>Team working</b>	<p>Good communication</p> <p><b>Clear expectations</b></p> <p>Positive teamwork</p> <p>Safeguarding</p> <p>Knowledge of community</p> <p><b>Whole team approach</b></p> <p>Team support</p> <p><b>Relationships</b></p> <p>Connections</p> <p>Colleague Friendships</p>	<p><i>"I think i-in the immediate case it's just keeping them safe ...keeping myself safe, keeping the school safe."</i></p> <p><i>"we'll just follow our procedures and log it and record it."</i></p> <p><i>"we share amongst... so even though, like I might work in one class, I will be on the playground with all the children..."</i></p> <p><i>"we will follow the procedures but then there's also the staff member who's your friend... Who you might go to to just have a chat with"</i></p> <p><i>"And there are opportunities to say um...'I need a break'...and...that is listened to."</i></p>	<p>3/80-82</p> <p>4/115</p> <p>4/130-131</p> <p>9/297-300</p> <p>19/616-628</p>
<b>Strategies for support</b>	<p>Good enough</p> <p>Responsibility</p> <p><b>Boundaries</b></p> <p><b>Making a difference</b></p> <p>Emotional support</p> <p>Empathy needed</p> <p>Connection</p> <p>Therapeutic interventions</p> <p>Training</p> <p>Sharing</p> <p>Communication</p> <p>Space to talk</p> <p><b>Practical strategies</b></p>	<p><i>"I work wi...wi... very tricky children. Um but it hasn't gotten me down...Because, so I think, I think whatever we're doing there must be something right".</i></p> <p><i>"yeah I guess it's offloading, it's, it's making [them] aware of what I go through during a day... that w-we shouldn't be complaining about anything."</i></p> <p><i>"we'll know that actually it's not our place to deal with things outside of school...It's a fine line. It's good to know...but we can't get involved... it's important to know if there's going to be an impact on the child..."</i></p> <p><i>"an EP came in and gave a whole school training...Emotion coaching...but that's just invaluable...it's completely transferrable"</i></p>	<p>18/592-595</p> <p>9/276-279</p> <p>11/351-361</p> <p>15/487-500</p>
<b>What Support looks like</b>	<p><b>Relationships</b></p> <p>No easy 'fix'</p> <p>Connection</p> <p>Right person to offer support</p> <p>Professional support=extreme level</p> <p>Space to talk</p> <p><b>Internal</b></p>	<p><i>"you can just say, 'oh I just had a bad morning' and that's enough,"</i></p> <p><i>"For me personally it's... it's probably just...sharing ...talking about it."</i></p> <p><i>"I don't expect someone to say, 'alright, okay, well, would you like to come out of that class and not work with that [yp]?' I don't expect</i></p>	<p>10/308</p> <p>16/515-517</p> <p>16/523-525</p>

	<p>Little chats Empathised with Individualised support <b>Empathy</b></p>	<p><i>a fix, just enough... just an acknowledgement".</i>  <i>"You just get like a...a nod from someone that yeah, yeah that...that was hard...And that's enough probably"</i>  <i>"it's better to...to talk to someone who ... can empathise, i.e. someone who understands the...the intricate situation that might have happened."</i>  <i>"I think for me talking to a colleague might be better than talking to a professional"</i></p>	<p>16/527-530</p> <p>17/552-553</p> <p>17/555-556</p>
<b>Current context</b>	<p>Conflict of expectation <b>Time as a resource</b> Funding constraints impact Capacity of support <b>Expectations on profession</b> Impacting outcomes <b>Wider services</b> agency cut impacts on outcomes</p>	<p><i>"in an ideal world children'll go out to play, they come back in...and get on with their work... you need to spend ten minutes or 20 minutes... actually in a place where they're ready to learn"</i>  <i>"most of the time we will try and support those vulnerable children because we know... [deep breath] they need the more emotional support than the other 29"</i>  <i>"the [outside professional] who came in h-had only that hour or half an hour to work with the [yp] Um and then [they] would leave and we were left, kind of, picking up the... what...whatever, you know"</i>  <i>"it's not money or confidentiality, it's...it's...it's um...uh ... government curriculum ...expectations...we feel that there's some children who we would just love to...to nurture".</i></p>	<p>12/379-389</p> <p>13/399-400</p> <p>15/464-499</p> <p>21/675-680</p>



## 5. Bobby's Table of Themes

Themes	Super-ordinate Themes	Quotes that evidence	Page/line #
<b>Relationships with Young People &amp; Families</b>	<b>Trust</b> SEMH <b>Safe space to talk</b> disclose Relationship priority Behaviour as communication Individual differences <b>Knowing YP</b> Sharing in a safe space Building over Time Bridging 'us and them gap' Knowledge of Social collusion Offering wider support	<i>"we can't...support children if we can't support the parents".</i> <i>"two mums today have disclosed to me about domestic abuse just today..."</i> <i>"You don't wanna break the relationships down".</i> <i>"we spend more time with the child than anyone else does"</i> <i>"I go through some o' the children that I'm concerned about and you look 'n you think right okay, their attendance is really low their lates really high, or, their attendance is 100%....an' you look 'n you think, I've seen you poorly"</i> <i>"it bridges the them 'n us bit"</i>	15/464-466 15/469  8/254 2/60 35/1092-1096  37/1180
	<b>Emotional Impact</b> Gut instinct Hard emotionally <b>Worry</b> Emotional impact <b>Feeling v fact evidence</b> Sense things wrong No evidence Accumulation of concern PBE Heart-breaking Holding Repetition <b>Guilt</b>	<i>"there's some children that we just have a gut feeling about and that we know that there's something there and there's not enough..."</i> <i>"we know what's going on... that's not uncommon... you're waiting for the big thing to happen"</i> <i>"we can get something... we can get something done now."</i> <i>"we are worried about it and then when you get that, it's not nice... it's not a nice feeling"</i> <i>"and I was absolutely fumin' because it is a thing...it's enough for me to worry."</i> <i>"that's, um ...absolutely heart-breaking"</i>	1/6-7  1/10-19  1/27 2/45 2/38-40  10/295-297
<b>Referrals</b>	High thresholds Limited support <b>Not listened to</b> Professional judgement Persistence Hands tied See most least listened to Good enough is not <b>Not good enough</b> <b>Following procedures</b> safeguarding training	<i>"we know there's enough but it's not enough for criteria"</i> <i>"we've reported something and when we've phoned, you feel im... like th... you're... you're belittled...like 'oh...well, that's not really a thing'...We're doin' this all day, every day, so we do know what...a thing is."</i> <i>"you cant do anythin' about that...when I phoned to deal with regularly... it's like 'well yeah, there's nothin' there'... there's nothin' you can do."</i>	1/7-8 2/33-42  6/162-166

		<p><i>"[yp] lived experiences are... But it's not enough to... meet any criteria, or to get a social worker involved"</i></p> <p><i>"their good enough might be different to our good enough"</i></p>	<p>6/172-175</p> <p>31/992</p>
<b>Multi-agency Working</b>	<p>Need to be positive</p> <p>Positive <b>relationships</b></p> <p>most heard</p> <p>Least heard but sees most</p> <p>Professional judgements</p> <p><b>Inconsistency</b> in other professionals</p> <p>Individual differences</p> <p>Multiple changes of MA workers</p> <p>Helpful advice from wider services</p> <p>'Light touch' support from positive connections</p> <p><b>Most time spent with YP</b></p>	<p><i>"when we're scoring on signs of safety, we're nearly always the lowest...and that's because we spend more time with the child than anyone else does"</i></p> <p><i>"Four times so far...four social workers".</i></p> <p><i>"we do find it does depend on who's doin' the assessments and things... we've got some social workers that come in and you're like, 'oh thank goodness it's that one!'"</i></p> <p><i>"we'll refer and then you might get a family support worker in for a bit, an' then that'll drop off"</i></p> <p><i>"sometimes you phone [LA specific service] for, y'know, just a bit of advice... and they're brilliant...It does depend who you get"</i></p>	<p>2/57-60</p> <p>5/135-139</p> <p>11/353-359</p> <p>12/376-377</p> <p>20/639-645</p>
<b>Strategies for support</b>	<p>Positive team working</p> <p>Connections with team members</p> <p><b>Team support</b></p> <p>Confidence in approach</p> <p>Knowledge of safeguarding</p> <p>Doing the right thing regardless (repetition)</p> <p>Creating a safe space for all</p> <p><b>Practical strategies</b> for support (home and YP)</p> <p>Caring staff</p> <p>Empathy</p> <p>Above and beyond</p> <p>Creating culture of support for all</p> <p><b>Keeping going</b></p>	<p><i>"Think the unthinkable question, the unquestionable... yep"</i></p> <p><i>"We keep on it... we are like dogs gnawing bones y'know, we don't let it go...just because we've been told that"</i></p> <p><i>"we've got really good TAs and s... teachers here that will monitor it too...build up a good chronology"</i></p> <p><i>"we both will be in tears at times.. I'll have a moment and [colleague name] will have a moment...we do bounce off each other, we do use each other a lot"</i></p> <p><i>"we can help with the simple things. So, another mum came in this morning, again, domestic... domestic abuse. He's left, she's got no money, she's totally broke...[yp] got no school shoes... that to her was such a worry... [colleague name] is finding a pair of shoes for them"</i></p> <p><i>"you can do all of those things and that's... that does make you feel better that you can help,...and"</i></p>	<p>13/394</p> <p>13/412-417</p> <p>13/417-423</p> <p>17/520-525</p> <p>24/755-767</p> <p>25/784-789</p>

		<i>they'll come to you and that's good".</i>	
<b>Current context</b>	Barriers for offering support <b>Funding impacts support</b> constraints Restrictions impacting outcomes Not 'just' education <b>Expectations on profession</b> <b>Wider financial climate</b>	<i>"it is hard and we are all getting more 'n more roles aren't we... We were just teachers at one point"</i> <i>"Funding was no object we'd have our own EP our own social worker...our own play therapist"</i> <i>"there's definitely more around that time when money's tight 'n, you know...there's all those family worries...you definitely notice then that that's when they sort o' come out"</i>	27/866-869  31/996-999  38/1215-1219

## 6. Charlie's Table of Themes

Themes	Super-ordinate Themes	Quotes that evidence	Page/line #
<b>Relationships with Children Young People &amp; Families</b>	Respect	<i>"I think children... most children can name an adult that they will talk to in school...if they were worried...they've said that"</i>	29/918-924
	Trust	<i>"I think also, as well as knowing the children the best, like saying about w... we've also worked really closely with some parents"</i>	4/120-121
	Safe space to talk	<i>"mum disclosed something to me on the phone...and it kind of explains a little bit of everything...I'm the person that she trusted"</i>	14/451-461
	disclose	<i>"I'm trying to say it in a way that is gonna keep my relationship with mum. I do probably word things in a different way but...that's who I've got to have that relationship with"</i>	26/812-818
<b>Emotional Impact</b>	Relationship priority		
	Behaviour as communication		
	Individual differences		
	Knowing YP and families		
	Sharing in a safe space		
	Building over Time		
	Consistency of contact		
	Offering wider support		
	Waiting	<i>"sometimes, which is even worse, is that you're really pleased when something does come out, because...because then you know that we can get some support in place"</i>	1/22-31
	Sense	<i>"sometimes just waiting for the child to say... you're waiting...and that's awful"</i>	1/13-18
<b>Multi-agency Working</b>	Cycle	<i>"when we have had parents who've come and disclosed...you feel like you are doing a good job... it's a poison chalice because you take that then with you"</i>	23/714-721
	PBE	<i>"Feel helpless and it...it...it does keep you awake at night...you wake up or, it just plays on your mind and something doesn't sit right"</i>	7/201-203
	Patterns of concern	<i>"you know something isn't right and we're tied"</i>	9/289-10/291
	Feeling v Evidence	<i>"just make you feel like you're ridiculous for phoning for that... I've been in tears of rage...just frustration...but what are you sending that person home to now?"</i>	11/337-346
	confirming suspicions		
	Repetition		
	Feeling helpless		
	Affecting home		
	Not listened to		
	Barriers to support		
<b>Multi-agency Working</b>	Hard emotionally		
	Referring can make feeling worse		
	Guilty		
	Helpless		
	Wider awareness	<i>"we're not always able to have that information...so we don't always know some of the medical stuff, for example... We only really know what the parents tell us and sometimes"</i>	3/96-101
	Most in contact		
	Most concern		
	Not Least listened to		
	Conflict of opinion		

	<p>Lack of <b>consistency</b> in staff</p> <p>Frequent changes of staff affect support</p> <p>Judged by others</p> <p><b>Positive relationships</b></p>	<p><i>that's honest and sometimes that's not"</i></p> <p><i>"I know that there's a pattern...of things. And when there's a change in social worker, or a change in professional and you' like hmm... and th... it starts again"</i></p> <p><i>"so when we phone [LA specific service] or something and they go... oh no, well you need to phone the parent, it's like, no... I would've done. If I thought that, that was what's needed"</i></p> <p><i>"it's really frustrating when you're not listened to when you phone up and say something's not right"</i></p> <p><i>"I've worked with [EP name] so I was really pleased because... she knows that...she says 'I know you wouldn't be phoning...and when [colleague name] was on the behaviour support team 'yep if you've made a referral I'll get 'em straight away, because I know you don't make a referral lightly"</i></p>	<p>4/127-5/131</p> <p>10/317-320</p> <p>20/614-615</p> <p>33/1040-1048</p>
<b>Team Relationships</b>	<p>Connections through experience</p> <p><b>Team support</b></p> <p>Talking to each other</p> <p><b>Shared experience</b></p> <p>Sharing responsibility</p> <p>'Checking in' regularly</p> <p>Safe space to talk</p> <p>Reassurance</p> <p><b>Caring culture</b></p>	<p><i>"Int: how would you manage that... that kind of emotional load for you guys?"</i></p> <p><i>Ch: Each other [laughs]...Completely each other"</i></p> <p><i>"one of us is generally a good cop....and the other one is the one who comes... gives the harder news sometimes"</i></p> <p><i>"we're really lucky that, kind of, we've got this room...it's a bit of a... haha... a ranting room"</i></p> <p><i>"you know, it's one of those like...really hard day...So tends to be that really...Each other"</i></p> <p><i>"I think everyone's quite nurturing here as well"</i></p>	<p>16/511-516</p> <p>14/435-439</p> <p>18/549-552</p> <p>18/557-561</p> <p>29/908</p>
<b>Strategies for support</b>	<p>Trust in procedures</p> <p><b>Keep going</b></p> <p>Sharing all concerns</p> <p>EP advice</p> <p>Positive relationships with professionals</p> <p>Helpful advice from wider services</p> <p><b>Practical strategies</b></p>	<p><i>"you know, when we have had parents who've come and disclosed...you feel like you are doing a good job"</i></p> <p><i>"the fact that parents have come in 'n recognise that there are people in school...that they don't have to tell but do tell"</i></p> <p><i>"We're like a... a dog with a bone"</i></p>	<p>23/714-717</p> <p>23/725-727</p>

	<p>'Light touch' support from positive connections</p> <p>Creating supportive environment for all</p> <p>Informal supervision</p>	<p><i>...if I could I would check it all"</i></p> <p><i>"like a food bank voucher... you know which we've got"</i></p> <p><i>"I think [LA specific training] is massively helpful...because that gives us some real strategies"</i></p> <p><i>"it's like, informal supervision isn't it?... But it's formal enough...it's informal but it's formal because of our roles...but it's informal coz you don't have to be filling a form"</i></p>	<p>4/110-114</p> <p>25/780</p> <p>28/881-883</p> <p>18/564-571</p>
<b>Current context</b>	<p>Time as a resource</p> <p>Gaps in support</p> <p>Reduction in wider services</p> <p>Frustration with current system</p> <p>Increase in disclosures</p> <p>High levels of need: limited resourcing</p> <p>Funding implications</p> <p>Wider financial climate</p>	<p><i>"there's also a gap between like family support and social care. So because that's all got to be voluntary...there's nothing in between and they don't need a social worker"</i></p> <p><i>"in a school like ours, where actually we could probably take up all of your [EP] time from an educational point...We can also equally take up all of your time with children who are experiencing that sort of thing"</i></p> <p><i>"the EP service helping, yes probably really good but I also think...in terms of all your allocated hours...a catchment like ours we could put you up for a year's worth of supervision-y type stuff"</i></p> <p><i>"I think this year is the year... we've had more disclosures...whether that's coincidence or whether it's because... change in economic climate which has bought other things to the fore..."</i></p>	<p>8/230-237</p> <p>28/871-878</p> <p>30/941-956</p> <p>38/1201-1208</p>

## Appendix 15. Example of stage 2 of Analysis

### Quinn's Table of Analysis

Emerging Themes	Original Transcript	Exploratory Comment
	<p>Int: I think that's working, we should be OK. Umm, so, kind of, just ...</p> <p>Qu: Fire away, what d'you wanna know first? Where d'you wanna start?</p> <p>Int: So I suppose, umm, can you kind of think of a time when that might have been the case for you when you, you feel that you were working with a child that was witnessing domestic violence at home?</p>	
Defining Roles	<p>Qu: So this, so I've got, I've got two ways of coming at this really because I've, I am the DSL here, so I lead on all the safeguarding for the college but I am also SENCo.</p> <p>Int: Yeah, sure.</p>	Multiple responsibilities inc SLT
Communication	<p>Qu: So I've got that, kind of, the warp and weft of that, you know, when you see a behaviour...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...that's that child communicating with you in the best way they can ...</p> <p>Int: Absolutely</p>	Being pulled in different directions?
Categorisation	<p>Qu: ...but what sits under that?</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: So, from a DSL perspective I can tell you that [deep breath] ... weee average somewhere between 80 and 90 safeguarding referrals a month...</p> <p>Int: Wow!</p> <p>Qu: ...here</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p>	Understanding of communication: no judgement
Certainty/Secrecy	<p>Qu: And ... that ... only 14 of those have been identified as having domestic abuse at the back of that.</p> <p>Int: Okay</p>	Need to define and categorise?
SEMH	<p>Qu: Umm ... but ... over ... over 200 of those so far this year have had emotional mental health anxiety...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...directly springing out.</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p>	Large workload
		Solid knowledge behind. Building evidence?
		Strong focus on need in general: regardless of cause

Normalising	<p>Qu: I think the difficulty we've got when you have teenagers whooo ... are more self-aware; have moore ... a little bit more emotional control but are ... if they are witnessing, or victims of domestic abuse...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...they've probably been putting up with it for some time and they've got used to it ...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...that's normal for them...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p>	<p>Reflecting on knowledge of yp and perhaps background. Sense that something is different but no proof</p> <p>Use of probably. Recognises characteristics and behaviours but little concrete evidence.</p>
Secrecy	<p>Qu: ...and they've probably thought through the process of, 'actually, that's just what happens in our family but I know I shouldn't tell anybody about it'.</p> <p>Int: So it's like normalised.</p> <p>Qu: So...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...it's normalised in their lives.</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p>	<p>Assumption that it is there and not discussed.</p> <p>Normalisation: just part of experience</p>
Certainty.	<p>Qu: Umm, so, it's really difficult to talk about individual cases where we know that ...</p> <p>Int: Absolutely.</p> <p>Qu: ...domestic abuse is...</p> <p>Int: Yep</p>	
Knowing v suspicion PBE?	<p>Qu: ...because we get lots of disclosures and referrals about stuff ...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...but domestic abuse isn't</p>	<p>Concrete evidence overall but senses avoidance of talking about this specific issue.</p>
High levels of concern: little disclosure	<p>it.</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: And of those 14, um, half of those have come from operation encompass calls ...</p> <p>Int: Oh Okay</p> <p>Qu: ...which are the calls...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...from the police where they've...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...been called to a domestic where they know children are present and ...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...were witnessing. So we've, I've only had out of, something like 600 referrals this academic year...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p>	<p>Operation Encompass (OE): Police alerts where the school has been informed by the police that they dealt with a DA incident at the home of a YP.</p> <p>600 OE calls: 7 self-reports.</p>



<p>Certainty v suspicion</p> <p>Need to know</p>	<p>Qu: ...only 7 of those have been self-referred in relation to domestic abuse, domestic violence.</p> <p>Int: Goodness me!</p> <p>Qu: So. We, kind of talking a little bit hypothetically ...</p> <p>Int: Yep</p> <p>Qu: ...in terms of ... what we actually know.</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: But ... you ... I think we then get into that next layer of when ... we get ... young people behaving aggressively, talking aggressively, showing those levels of disrespect and those kind of ... either attachment difficulties, or ...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ... umm ... kind of antisocial behaviours or inability ... an inability to demonstrate pro-social behaviours ...</p>	<p>Concrete knowledge important</p>
<p>Behaviour as communication</p>	<p>Qu: But ... you ... I think we then get into that next layer of when ... we get ... young people behaving aggressively, talking aggressively, showing those levels of disrespect and those kind of ... either attachment difficulties, or ...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ... umm ... kind of antisocial behaviours or inability ... an inability to demonstrate pro-social behaviours ...</p>	<p>Behaviour overall as a communication</p>
<p>Awareness/ Vigilance Suspicion</p>	<p>Int: Yep</p> <p>Qu: ... then that's always at the back of your mind, is ...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p>	<p>Underlying reasons why: uncertainty</p>
<p>Sense?</p>	<p>Qu: ... what are the drivers of that? What are the drivers of that?</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p>	
<p>Underlying cause Knowledge base driving thought</p>	<p>Qu: Is that something ... uuh ... in a genetic ... is it an underlying um difficulty or need? Or, is it that kind of nurture experiential, that's what's brought them to this point?</p> <p>Int: Yeah, absolutely</p>	<p>Knowledge of experience shaping behaviour</p>
<p>Suspicion</p>	<p>Qu: So ... umm ... It's very difficult to talk specifically about domestic abuse. It's much easier to say, what do we do in response to, um, what comes through the door and what we see ...</p>	<p>Specific knowledge versus practitioner understanding of what behaviours look like.</p>
<p>Seeing</p>		
<p>Awareness behaviour as communication</p>	<p>Int: Yep</p> <p>Qu: ... and how kids present. So, we ... we try to be as accepting as and, and as inclusive as we possibly can.</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p>	
<p>Need to support</p>	<p>Qu: Umm, we try to identify, where possible, what the need is but what we certainly try to do, umm, through our system of learning passports, rather than individual education plans ...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ... umm, is adopt a common approach to a child who is presenting with those sorts of ...</p> <p>Int: Okay</p>	<p>Support regardless of cause. Based on need. Knowledge of YP?</p>



Background awareness: impact on YP	<p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: She would be a really good example of those, umm ... of those 8. She was adopted at, was taken into care at 2½.</p> <p>Int: Oh, okay</p> <p>Qu: Adopted at 3½.</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: Umm, things went relatively smoothly 'til she got to 14 and then she blew up ...</p> <p>Int: Okay</p> <p>Qu: ... almost overnight.</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: Umm ... and so I think, even though we are 100% concrete sure that she's not experienced any of that sort of abuse for the last 10 years ... 11 years of her life ...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ... that ... the extreme nature of what she experienced in those first two years ...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ... has, was just a ticking time bomb ...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ... and as she became a little bit more aware and ...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ... started asking those questions ...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ... came up. I had something very similar ... uh, two years ago, an adopted girl who had been adopted early ... um, yeah, at a same sort of age 2, 3 ...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ... umm ... who ended up in, in the space of one year, ended up [deep breath] coming to our school from another school as a managed move because it had broken down there and she was doing the drugs thing.</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: Uuh ... whilst she was with us she got more heavily involved in that, lots of risk-taking behaviours ... umm, uhh ... placement with, with her adopted family of over ten years broke down ...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ... she ended up back in care. Umm, so I think that there's, there's an awful lot more to look at and I'm, I'm asking questions and tryin' to work with the vulnerable, um, children team at the moment to say, you know, look, once a kid's adopted that's not</p>	<p>Awareness of background able to recall immediately.</p> <p>Evidence and certainty in present: monitoring of placement likely and therefore factual.</p> <p>uncertain re past experiences</p> <p>Changing states of understanding impacting later when settled.</p> <p>Risk taking behaviours</p> <p>Aware of impact on the background of individuals being understood as paramount to support them.</p>
Knowledge and certainty essential		
Awareness of individual need/ history		
Ongoing support necessary		

Systemic change required	a-a reason for the local authority to just, you know ... Int: Yeah ...	MA working. Trying? Feeling unsuccessful?
Multiagency working	Qu: ... brush their hands and say ... that ... Int: It's very difficult isn't it. Qu: ... that's one that we don't have to worry about any more ... Int: Yeah Qu: ... because I think, the-those adopted parents don't know what they're taking on ... Int: Absolutely Qu: ... and they don't ..... Uh, I've got another dad that I'm meeting this morning who ... his daughter's taken two overdoses so far this year. She's not in school at the minute. She went missing again on ... also on Tuesday.	Top down systems not meeting need effectively?
Wider family support	Int: Mhmm	
Responsibility	Qu: Umm ... who again, she was adopted young, um, but when I started talking to him a year or so ago, um and she really started to hit the rocks and wobble ... Int: Mhmm	
Normalising day to day.	Qu: ... he had no idea, no real grasp about ... attachment, or, umm, you know, the damage that can be done early ... Int: Yeah	Feels homes and carers need an awareness of these things.
Wider systems need to support.	Qu: ... and the impact on that ... Int: Mhmm Qu: ... and it seems like ... you know, these parents aren't getting the information that they need...	Preparation to prevent uncertainty/unpredictability. Equipping/ skilling up?
Passed to School responsibility?	Int: Yeah Qu: ... to ... really help them be aware of what has gone on. So, you know, particularly with girls, I see them hit puberty, even though they might have had ten years of amazing support and love ... Int: Yeah	Need information.
Practice based evidence/ experience driving awareness	Qu: ... and care, that early damage, if it doesn't get th-the therapeutic intervention ... Int: Yeah Qu: ... early enough, we're then picking up the pieces when they...	
Responsibility. Holding.	Int: And you are at that crucial point aren't you? Because essentially like you've said, you're supporting them to recognise and understand difficult situations, as well as kind of, bringing that emotional, kind of,	Their responsibility.

Safe relationships	<p>connection to that. So they're in a safe enough place to suddenly be able to, kind of, erupt and actually...</p> <p>Qu: Yeah</p> <p>Int: ... that's a very difficult situation because like you said, it's, it's almost bigger because they've been fine for so long ...</p> <p>Qu: Yeah</p> <p>Int: ... but actually they haven't been fine, it's just...</p> <p>Qu: <b>They've just been coping.</b></p> <p>Int: Absolutely</p> <p>Qu: But as soon as a bit more stress comes on ...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ... a bit more pressure comes on, key stage 4, they get that social pressure, they-they-they broaden their awareness of, um, the world and their place in the world and relationships ...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ... and they maybe start, you know, the hormones start kicking in and they start thinking 'oh my body could 'ave a baby now...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ... and uhh, if I'm feeling that, why did my mum not feel that about me? ...</p> <p>Int: Oh gosh, yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...and why di-der...</p> <p>Int: Absolutely</p> <p>Qu: ...and bu-bu-bu-bu-bu-bu'.</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: So it goes on. So I think there's a lot more work needs to be done...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...around that, umm ...</p> <p>Int: How about, um, those cases where [deep breath] you've got an inkling but you're just no quite ... not quite sure yet?</p> <p>Qu: We just, all we do and um, I me ... I've got a team of four other assistant um, t' a safeguarding leads.</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: We meet fortnightly, umm ... we've all got other pastoral responsibilities as well.</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: Umm ... so we've got a pretty good handle between us, between the five of us, around that, who's, who's acting out...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p>	<p>Wider expectations on individuals</p> <p>Wider knowledge and understanding</p> <p>Repetitive cycle</p> <p>Team important</p> <p>Regular communication. Multiple roles</p>
Knowing and preparing		
Coping/ok		
Wider expectations impacting on outcomes		
Trying to understand YP: empathy		
Team approach		
Dual responsibilities		

Waiting for evidence Sense/ expectation of experience.	Qu: ...who's presenting and who's whatever. Umm ... and ..... we, uhh ... essentially what we do is we do...we will have discussions about: <b>we're waiting for a disclosure, we're waiting for...</b> Int: Yeah Qu: <b>...a disclosure.</b> Int: Okay Qu: And ....w-we don't often get them from those sorts of kids. Int: Yeah	Waiting for evidence  Need facts  Repetitive to emphasise the time lapse.
Certainty	Qu: Interestingly, we did have one last week, from a year 7 girl. They've moved down from up country, umm ... and ... it-it was a really good example from a safeguarding, rather than an SEN perspective, of it you've got a good <b>safeguarding culture within your college ...</b> we had ... by Christmas we had <b>five things logged.</b>	Rare to receive sharing from a specific group?
Categorising roles	Int: Wow! Qu: Low... I'll... Int: Yeah Qu: ...use the word <b>low</b> ... Int: Yeah Qu: <b>...but not referable level.</b> Int: <b>Like/light [12:53]</b> flags, yep.	Shared responsibility by teams Concerns: recognition that the 'flags' emphasised by safeguarding are not enough for a referral to be successful?
Culture/ethos to support	Qu: Umm ... and ... then we got another one after Christmas and then we got another through a friend's mum, allegation that she'd been smacked and... Int: Mhmm	'low'
Low levels	Qu: ...she'd posted a picture ... umm ... and ... we acted on that. We put a referral in and i-within days, <b>umm th-they sat on it, coz we put it in just before half term, they sat on it over half term</b> and then they got ducks in a line ... police and social care ready to go and dad, from sort of telling us they were gonna come and see her and interview her ... umm t' dad was arrested within five hours and that's it... Int: Gosh, yeah Qu: So <b>we're now mopping up the pieces...</b> Int: Yeah Qu: <b>...for her...</b>	Significant
Waiting. Thresholds.	Int: Mhmm Qu: ...because, now it's all out in the open for her, she's dealing with the betrayal of the family... Int: Yeah	Time lapse
Little and often		
"Others" impacting on outcome 'They' "Others" Held too.		
Ultimately responsible for YP		Main responsibility. Their job to do this. Thinking about effective MA and who ultimately ends up with the workload?

Sense/ experience	Qu: ...and lettin' her mum down all the rest of it. Int: Mhmm	
Waiting	Qu: Now there's been no allegation of domestic abuse towards mum...	
	Int: Okay	
	Qu: ...but from mum's reaction...	
	Int: Yep	
EBP/PBE Expectation	Qu: ...what mum said, how mum's protected dad...	
	Int: Yep	
	Qu: ...and the things that she hasn't said about what's gone on at home...	
	Int: Yep	
	Qu: Umm, yeah, I'd put, you know...	
	Int: Yeah there's that feeling.	
Sense/ feeling	Qu: ...a-a good few, good few Pounds on the fact that, you know ... that one door to be [14:18] disclosed, it's not the only one...	
	Int: Absolutely	
Knowledge guiding practice	Qu: ...getting beaten when dad gets angry...	
	Int: Yeah	
	Qu: ...or upset, or has a few, or whatever.	
	Int: And even the protective factor is, kind of, that emotional control isn't it? That coercion, and kind of psychological.	
	Qu: Yeah, a-absolutely. We've got, you know, there's one, there's one boy, he's now in year 10 but in year 8 heeee ... his mum made a referral because sh-umm, she found him sexually abusing his little sister.	
Responsibility	Umm, he has ... we've had quite a lot of social care input and support and all the rest of it...	
	Int: Mhmm	
MA input	Qu: ...and I've spoken to the social workers about this but ... he has, almost said something on a number of occasions...	
	Int: Yeah	
Waiting	Qu: ...but he's just got enough control that he doesn't say stuff.	
	Int: Okay	
Self control suspected?	Qu: His dad is in the navy, so we've got, we've got ... over 200 of our students have got naval connections, forces connections...	
Underlying cause?	Int: Yeah	
Categorisations	Qu: ...and so on. Umm and there are a number of dads in the forces who like things just so.	
	Int: Yep	

Understanding and experience prompting sense of underlying. Evidence Based Practice (EBP) v Practice Based Evidence (PBE)? Practitioner experience guiding understanding.

Lack of concrete evidence.

'Gut instinct' based on experience

MA working. Still ultimately their responsibility when YP considered a perpetrator.

Nearly disclosed; not quite there yet.

Self control suspected because of the need for secrecy?  
Basing on PBE?

Children of Military Families (CoMF)

Specific Categorisations (CoP specifically driven?)

Knowledge/ expectation?	Qu: And uhh, when kids cant meet those standards, they get frustrated. Int: Mhmm	
Reflection/ categorisation.	Qu: Umm t'... a few of the domestic abuse and kind of domestic violence cases that I've ... I have dealt with over the last few years, probably half of those of service families... Int: Mhmm Qu: ...which is disproportionate... Int: Yeah Qu: ...for the number of kids that we've got. So they represent about a fifth of our population but probably half... Int: Yeah	Feels like high proportions?  Clear use of word
Knowledge of YP and area	Qu: ...of the DV stuff that I get. Umm and again, we get, what we see is behaviour changes when dads are there and dads aren't there. Int: Mhmm	Drivers for concern: Changing in behaviours key safeguarding knowledge (opposite to Nordic study: Markstrom & Munger, 2018)
Behaviour as communication	Qu: It is predominantly dads... Int: Yeah Qu: ...th-there are a few mums. Umm ... but we don't get allegations, we just see behaviour changes. Int: Yeah	
Behaviour: Facts v sense Certainty v suspicion	Qu: And if we don't get that disclosure there's ... very little that we do ... so we ... y- you can do about it, other than go back to what we talked about earlier which is, create a culture where, umm ... students feel valued, supported and all the rest of it. Int: Yeah	Concrete evidence essential Helplessness?
Need Fact Evidence necessary	Qu: So when [deep breath] when we do safeguarding training and when we do ... umm ... our SEN training, we talk about inclusion, we talk about generating a climate for learning... Int: Mhmm	Training others: responsibility.
Culture/ethos	Qu: ...as a first ... kind of ... foundation stone for all of those things. Int: Mhmm Qu: Whether that is, umm ... progress and effective learning... Int: Mhmm	Culture and climate of work environment
Staff training Responsibility= knowledge needed.	Qu: Umm, a culture where they feel safe, from a safeguarding perspective and emotionally held... Int: Yeah Qu: ...or whether we are looking at meeting and identifying a special educational need ...	Awareness of needs primary to learning.
Knowledge of YP /learning development?		



Culture Ethos/ safety. Holding	and so it's that bit ... the bit that I-I pull things back to an awful lot when I'm training, is, this sort of, the Maslow middle section of love and belonging? Int: Yeah absolutely	
Relationships	Qu: And what does that look like in your classroom? Int: Yeah	Using Psych theory and knowledge to drive understanding. Sharing knowledge and experience with others.
Safety and knowledge	Qu: Umm and i-it's kind of, we did a piece of training last year for staff where we just ... I put Maslow's <i>Hierarchy of Needs</i> up... Int: Yeah	
Training skilling up	Qu: ...and it said 'what do you do?' and each of the five levels, 'what do you do in your classroom that supports that?' Int: Fab	Skilling up all staff.
Sharing Knowledge	Qu: And so from an inclusive perspective, if you are supplying blue paper for the three dyslexic kids that you know that they help. Int: Mhmm	Responsibility of whole team to understand  Inclusion
	Qu: That's saying to them on a belonging level that, you're noticed, your needs are known and understood... Int: Yeah	Belonging; creating a safe environment for learning but also disclosures?
Relationships Holding	Qu: ...and I'm doing something about that for you. Int: Yeah and we're thinking about you, yeah.	YP at the centre. Key focus
Thinking of	Qu: Yeah. So you're there, you're held in mind and that's, that's all good and subconsciously those ... we are trying to make the point that, umm, that does matter... Int: Mhmm	Recognising need to feel thought of. Becoming key people and attachment figures?
Holding	Qu: ...and those little bits will contribute. Remembering that ... so and so played in the netball team and asking them how they did. Int: Yeah	
	Qu: Or remembering, uuhh that they were in the band and, and they had a performance last week. Int: Yeah	Little key bits of information for connection. Holding huge amounts of knowledge about pupils in head at all times.
Holding in mind: Relationships Knowing YP	Qu: Or remembering that they got their black belt outside of school but th... just those little bits. Int: Yeah Qu: Umm, feed into that kind of culture and climate across the school, that... Int: Fab	Culture of setting crucial.

Culture ethos	Qu: ...even though we are a big organisation, as individuals you are still valued, known, appreciated... Int: Definitely	Individuals are important as well as the wider community
Holding in mind Relationships	Qu: Umm, as I say... but it ... I think it's really difficult when I then ... I can then just say to you, we've only had 14 kids that we've identified this year as victims of... Int: Yeah	Hard to define and say with certainty.
Challenging. Suspicion v evidence/fact. Concrete.	Qu: ...domestic abuse on top of a similar number last year... Int: Yeah	
Not enough as suspected?	Qu: ...and so on, you know. So that doesn't, that doesn't total a huge amount. Int: Mhmm Qu: Funnily enough I had a ... somebody came in and did a safeguarding audit we me, um, last week ... someone from the, um, uhhh trust and um, asked you know, do we have a problem with domestic abuse a- and I said, 'well, define that'. Int: Yeah	
Challenge to identify Sense/ suspicion Concrete v 'gut'?	Qu: Coz I said, 'I can show you the data which would suggest we don't...' Int: Mhmm Qu: ...but I think it would be a bigger problem if we weren't thinking that there's, there are issues and concerns and that, you know, we are not at least representative of... Int: Yeah	Data does not always help.
Careful to still recognise. Remain vigilant	Qu: ...of that as a culture and community, uh-which is you know a-a kind of nationally. Int: Absolutely	
National culture Wider systemic issues Secrecy	Qu: I think the other thing that is really interesting with this community is, we ... we don't hit the same sort of bottom end deprivation of umm, uh maybe a [place name] or a [place name] Int: Mhmm Qu: ...that attract an awful lot of funding and stuff and there's some... Int: Yeah	Culture problem of secrecy.
Categorisation	Qu: ...quite highly recognised, kind of, poverty and we know that. Int: Mhmm, yeah	
Resources	Qu: Domestic abuse and various other things are, kind of, directly correlated to that. But what we have is 40% of our community and our school population... Int: Mhmm	
Poverty		

Wider community awareness	Qu: ...come from the next bracket up of deprivation. Int: Yep	
Resourcing?	Qu: So we don't hit the levels for funding but almost half of our college wh... if you use those bottom two... Int: Yeah Qu: ...half of our college are well below... Int: Mmm Qu: ...the bottom half in terms of poverty. So we don't attract a lot of the additional funding that's available but there is, you know, absolutely there is poverty... Int: A need... Qu: ...within this community... Int: ...yeah	Limited resourcing
Categorisation= funding/ resources	Qu: ...and without [place name] and the naval base acting as a-an employer and... Int: Mhmm Qu: ...if you like, that gives a false impression because they're not from the community... Int: Absolutely	Categorisation affecting resources. Nature of environment of socio-political climate.
Data skewing	Qu: ...a lot of them. They're people who come in... Int: Yep Qu: ...but they affect our deprivation scores and all-all the rest of it. Int: Yep [laughs] Qu: Umm ... yeah without that we'd be, it'd be a very different story and... Int: Absolutely	'Scoring' for funding
Scoring	Qu: ...a very different kettle of fish, so. Int: So how do you feel you kind of combat that? You've talked quite a bit I think about um, it feels like there's got ... they've got a strong team ethos and would you say that's kind of crucial to managing... Qu: Yeah Int: ... those a ... those things? Qu: Because in an organisa... so we've got fourteen hundred students... Int: Mhmm Qu: ...if you're not a team... Int: Yeah Qu: ...you cant do, y'know, there's just no way you can cover that sort of... Int: Yeah	Team essential
Team working	Qu: ...number of students, there's no way you can know them all individually. Int: Mmm	Size of settings impacting on knowledge of students?  Team essential

Not manageable to achieve.	Qu: So you have to rely on those ... that kind of hierarchy, those structures of, of tutors, of class teachers, of ... um ... pastoral support team, although those are a fast dwindling resource...	Need to know them individually
Relationships Knowing YP	Int: Of course Qu: ...in the current financial climate. Umm a-and pastoral leaders to sort of triage and to make sure that the right ... the right people go with the right ... the right support.	Structure within the systems need to work together
Categorising responsibility.	Int: Yeah Qu: Ummm, we. What we've done within the SEN team over the last four years, is ... um, develop the champions model. So...	Resources
Current climate. Socio-political/ environmental?	Int: Okay Qu: ...umm ... t'about I th... f-f... probably five years ago, um, the autism support team introduced a-autism champions...	Current climate
Training and development.	Int: Yep Qu: ...and they did it ... there was a little training programme for them...	Thinking about who works best for who? Support delivery from the right relationships
Moving forward	Int: Mhmm Qu: ...and they kind of, there was a quite clearly identified job role and um, you know, it was a model that sped across the county pretty successfully. Um, we employed an autism champion and she did a cracking job and then we employed a second.	Training upskilling staff
Categorisation of need.	Int: Mhmm Qu: Uuhh but ... what I felt ... is that ... most of the kids that ... whose needs are hardest to meet don't fit into a nice neat box.	Categorisation Clearly defined job roles
Supporting team members Celebrating success.	Int: Yep, absolutely Qu: So we sometimes call them alphabet spaghetti, they've got a bit of ASD, they've got a bit of ADHD, they've got a bit of, you know, whatever DFD, or...	Categorisation needed but not necessarily helpful?
Categorisation not helpful?	Int: Mmm Qu: ...dyslexia, or whatever. Int: Yeah Qu: Umm and it means that from a class teacher's perspective, whilst there's graphs of research and arguments against labelling but actually, if you know you've got a dyslexic kid then there are...	
	Int: Strategies Qu: ...strategies that we know work for an awful lot of them and, you know, if it's a more process-driven difficulty then these	Categorising helps identify key ways to support. Strategies linked to areas of need to help train others with clarity?

Knowledge guiding support. Feeling confident in strategies/ practice.	are common strategies that we know will go quite a long way to meet that need. Umm and so let's do this that and the other and a-away you go, but those more complex kids, those are the ones that we were finding it hardest to meet their needs so, we've dropped the autism from the champion table and we call them 'learning support champions'...	Common; the norm to support a certain range of needs?
EBP/PBE	Int: Amazing Qu: ... aahh ... they do a combination of training, so they are ... they haven't all done all of it but if they stay with us long enough they would. Umm but they do ... there's a dyslexia champion training programme out there.	Complexity of understanding impacts on how to support best?
Complexity of need Relationship Understanding?	Int: Yep Qu: So they do the dyslexia champion training, they do the autism champion training. They also, um, do the new Thrive, the trauma informed schools...	Training to build understanding of need Retention of staff tricky? Consistency?
Training	Int: Yep Qu: ...the ten day. So I've got two of them have done that.	Known LA strategies
Staff retention	Int: Wow! Qu: So, um, between the team, they're kind of well skilled. They've done things like, so [colleague name]'s done Draw and Talk with them.	
Training: knowledge and skilling up	Int: Mhmm Qu: Um, they're all doing Circle of Friends training next week. Uuhh ... I cant remember ... I think [colleague name]'s doing that but [colleague name] or [colleague name]'s doing that for us.	LA EP specific training
Knowing team	Int: Yep Qu: Umm, so, w-we're kind of just developing their broader skillset. So where we've got, um ... and-and those learning support champions act as the key worker for all of ... other kids on our record o'need.	LA EP specific training
Holding info	Int: Okay Qu: So they're ... they're the first point of call, they-they write and review the learning passports, they do the termly reviews, they're the first point of contact for parents and so on and so forth.	2 LA EPs at setting working collaboratively
EP training	Int: Mhmm Qu: Umm and they're the ones who dooo whatever support needs to be in place. So they might do just some generic mentoring,	Training for whole staff too. Creating culture of support
EP Training/Support		Prioritising. Categories help to manage this?

<p>Prioritisation Family support. Relationships.</p> <p>Practical strategies</p> <p>Understanding needs</p> <p>Practical strategies Future planning?</p> <p>Training and skilling up?</p> <p>Understanding individuals Relationships</p>	<p>just to keep them ticking along, they might do um, some very specific input on strategies to help learners be more independent around understanding and having, um, having a range of things that they can do to manage their dyslexia. So-might be really specific...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...programme around understanding what they're difficulties are, you know, these are alternative recordings, use your <b>Chrome [26:36]</b> book like this, use mind maps like that, bla-bla-bla-bla-bla-bla-bla, whatever. Umm, so it might be something really, kind of, clear cut and simple like that, they might meet weekly, they might week ... meet half-termly...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...they ... kind a... so they're bespoke to what we think that child needs at that particular time. Umm, some of them, uh, are part of maybe more of a group intervention, so, the two ladies, [colleague name] next door is one of them...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...who've done the trauma informed stuff...</p> <p>Int: Brilliant</p> <p>Qu: ...run, uh we call it, we still call it Thrive coz it's more...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ... friendly than [laugh] <b>tears...</b> <b>[27:17]</b></p> <p>Int: Trauma</p> <p>Qu: ...oh ... trauma</p> <p>Int: [laughs]</p> <p>Qu: Um ... but .. we ... yeah they run, um, most of them are on a weekly intervention, some of them individually, really, really aren't ready to work with others yet.</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: But most them small group. Um and so they [deep breath] just do that, kind of, th-they'll do a programme which is all around developing those, you know, that kind of hierarchy of recognising their own emotions...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...through to recognising emotions in others, through to ... um ... being able to express their, kind of, what they're thinking and feeling, to be able to regulate some</p>	<p>Specific roles in school defined to offer support.</p> <p>Range of work to manage with individuals.</p> <p>Connotations associated with naming specific 'Trauma'</p> <p>Individually planned Knowledge of YP necessary</p>
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Practical strategies	<p>sort of control over that and then interacting with others and so ... we will group kids depending on how they present, what we think their underlying need is...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...and if think they'll work together well. So they'll be typically in a group of about four. Umm, if you look out the window, that's one of the projects that they've helped with.</p> <p>Int: Awe!</p> <p>Qu: So they've built those. Umm they've build some raised beds. So some of them just sit and play connect 4 or chess...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...as a distractor to talking.</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: Umm, so they do all sorts of different stuff and again, we pitch that around what we think their need or common interests might be.</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: Umm, for some of them we deliberately, like the guys who've built that...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p>	<p>Supporting strategies for future success. Not just holding-forward planning.</p> <p>Need to know YP really well for it to be helpful to them.</p>
Knowing YP	<p>Qu: Umm, so they do all sorts of different stuff and again, we pitch that around what we think their need or common interests might be.</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: Umm, for some of them we deliberately, like the guys who've built that...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...or helped to build that, they have built all of it, umm ... that's definitely an introduction to our construction team because we think that's their academic pathway, that's where they're likely to end up is...</p> <p>Int: That's nice</p> <p>Qu: So just ... that's, that's a key stage 4 facility but it familiarises them with the staff and in gets them used to working in that area and stuff...</p>	<p>Knowing not all ready to talk yet: providing a safe and predictable environment.</p> <p>Future planning and outcomes.</p>
Future planning	<p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: So ... if ...</p> <p>Int: Kind of a smoother transition for them.</p> <p>Qu: If they choose to go into that then...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ... then that's done for them. Umm those, like I said, two-two of them have had the full trauma informed package, so they're really conversant with all of the, the attachment, the ... umm ... adverse childhood event stuff...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...and all of that. Umm ... and ... so it's, it's very much part of our, the team's</p>	<p>Training specific to TIS programme (Trauma Informed Schools)</p>

Training	thinking in terms of when you look at a child who's struggling with their work... Int: Mhmm Qu: ...that's the, that's the outcome of something that's underlying... Int: Yeah Qu: ...not, y'know it's not just try'n fix the work bit but let's try'n go back a few steps and... Int: That's fab Qu: ...underpin it. Umm ... so ... it is ... huh ... I dunno, it-it's difficult to talk directly about the domestic abuse... Int: Yeah, absolutely Qu: ...as the, the underlying factor... Int: Yep Qu: ...because ... we just don't know. Int: Yep Qu: Umm in most of the cases we just don't know. Int: Absolutely Qu: Umm ... and ... in the cases where we do ..... in a lot of ways we don't actually change the way we treat them... Int: That's brilliant Qu: ...because that's our underlying ethos... Int: Yep Qu: ...but we just do it from a position of being a little bit vigilant and a-a little bit more, um, mindful...	Knowledge driving awareness of likely underlying cause or cause in general: behaviour as communication
Underlying root cause		
Understanding		Certainty and 'sense'
Vigilance		Uncertainty
Uncertainty but sense?		Culture of setting is important
Certainty		Responsibility for vigilance and knowing.
Approaching need		Root cause
Culture		
Vigilance and approach		
EBP PBE	Qu: Is there... So yeah, we do, I mean ... if- if it's needed, you know, typically, if you know somebody has witnessed or experienced domestic abuse then, there's likely to be some sort of social care intervention or whatever. Int: Mhmm Qu: So we'd liaise with those guys around it... Int: Yeah	Likely but not necessarily always. Knowledge of fact is important for action and threshold for wider agency support.
MA working	Qu: But when they step away, they might continue with some pastoral support... Int: Yeah Qu: ...or they might just have a key person that they know they can go to anyway and so it might not be that they're on a	Multiagency response  MA response but ultimately school managing front line consistently



School responsibility	fortnightly appointment or a weekly appointment... Int: Mmm Qu: ...but they'll 'ave an identified adult that they can... Int: Pop in to	Trusted relationship at the heart of this
Relationships	Qu: ...just drop in and just say 'it's not going so well'. Int: So for those case like your example where, um, within a term you'd had, kind of, five low level ... when you're waiting, kind of, holding for that disclosure, kind of, how would you say that's, that's feeling as a, as a team?	
Flexibility of approach	Qu: T'umm, I think yooooou just get used to it. Int: Yeah Qu: And there's a degree of anxiety, but I think what, all ... all we can do is just say, 'we've done everything that we can'. Int: Yep, absolutely	Normalising
Normalising	Qu: Umm and ..... although, y-yeah ... and th-the simple answer is that's not for everyone. Int: Mhmm Qu: So one of my DSLs, who's also an assistant head, she has handed her notice in las week... Int: Oh gosh	Emotional response but need to categorise and reassure Good enough: has met their responsibility.
Emotional response Done enough	Qu: ...because she cant manage that anymore. Int: Mhmm Qu: Umm and we've tried to chop and change the way she works and her responsibilities and her roles, but she just, she's full, I guess. She's got three young kids and... Int: Mhmm Qu: ...she just hasn't got the emotional capacity to be a mum and do that. Int: Absolutely	Not always able to be managed as clear cut
Individual difference (staff and pupils).	Qu: And that's really sad coz she's really good. Int: Mhmm Qu: But it-it and what's also really sad is I'd already talked to [colleague name] and [colleague name] as a work plan for this year, that we were going'o introduce some supervision... Int: Fantastic	Enough distress to warrant leaving the job.
Emotional capacity		Emotionally full and reached capacity. Affecting home life.
No judgement Empathy with colleagues		Need to protect home life too. Not a sign of weakness or incompetence: perhaps a sign of conscientiousness?  LA EPs commissioned to deliver supervision within the school.

Planning/ Strategies	<p>Qu: ...and it just ... I'm meeting with [colleague name] later on to just sketch that out...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...but it hasn't come in time to save her, but I don't think [deep breath] in all reality, I think all that would have happened is supervision might have delayed that...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...or, it might've brought it to a head quicker.</p>	<p>EP in to support staff wellbeing</p> <p>Sense of being 'saved' emotional support will save future?</p>
Feels responsibility.	<p>Int: Mhmm, coz she's processing it sooner.</p> <p>Qu: She, yeah, because she's had a chance to reflect and get it out earlier.</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: So, yeah, it is difficult. I've had, I've had, kind of ... yeah, numerous sleepless nights. I think, what I find is, it's not individual cases...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...that you worry about, it's in an organisation like this with the volume, what you're worrying about is, is the cumulative of um ... Have we done the right thing for that? Have we done the right thing for that? Have we done the right thing for that? And because I was doing this, that and the other, what've I missed?</p>	<p>Processing is likely to produce some recognition of emotional response to managing roles.</p> <p>Affecting home life and ability to rest and shut off</p>
Affecting home	<p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...that you worry about, it's in an organisation like this with the volume, what you're worrying about is, is the cumulative of um ... Have we done the right thing for that? Have we done the right thing for that? Have we done the right thing for that? And because I was doing this, that and the other, what've I missed?</p>	<p>Worry: concern</p> <p>Information is overwhelming: holding it in their heads.</p>
Accumulative issue	<p>Int: Yep</p> <p>Qu: And you're not, you d... you just cannot turn around the volume of work quick enough...</p>	<p>Feels responsibility deeply: worried about missing</p>
Questioning	<p>Int: Yeah absolutely</p> <p>Qu: ...even as, you know, as a team to get everything...</p>	<p>Not enough time/resources</p>
Fear of missing?	<p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...done...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...and then, so that's, although that's a lower level worry, it's more of a wearing worry than some of the big ones?</p>	<p>Team thinking still not just individual</p>
Managing all. Responsibility.	<p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: So, for example, um, on Tuesday night we had two girls missing. The one that I said that, you know, I left work at quarter to seven when we'd finally got the police to take to hospital...</p>	<p>Levels of concern so although not a highly emotive worry the longevity of the thoughts affect longer term.</p>
Levels of worry Persistent nature?	<p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...but I still had another one missing...</p> <p>Int: My goodness</p>	<p>Serious incident but has become normal "matter of fact" tone.</p>

Reflection? Normalising	Qu: ...and ... But I went home and slept absolutely fine that night... Int: Mhmm	Surprised at this? Recognising through reflection that this is unusual? Feels should have been more affected?
Done enough	Qu: ...because I knew that we'd done everything that we could... Int: Yeah	Knowing good enough: met responsibility Strategy and procedure puts mind at rest.
Strategies and procedures	Qu: ...we'd followed the safety plan, we'd done all o' that, so even if the worst had happened, which at the current moment is, you know, every time you stop and reflect a minute, 'actually I only need one more of these overdoses to ... Int: Yeah	Space to think: worries re responsibility.
Responsibility	Qu: ... be, you know, go slightly wrong and we're done'. Int: Yeah	Done? In eyes of Law: under pressure to keep everything going or emotionally?
Keep going	Qu: T... um ... e-every time you stop and think about it for too long you just, you can get yourself in a bit of a s-state about it but, that ... on Tuesday night I went home, I was absolutely fine with that ... but then there uh ... kind of, just last half term, it got too much for me...	Can process but can make you more emotionally aware and then causes issues? Keeping going to ensure ok? Overloaded and became too much
Emotional recognition	Int: Mhmm Qu: ...just the volume...	
Emotional impact	Int: Yeah Qu: ...and the pace. Um, I ... I've got bad before and just worked myself into the ground. Int: Mhmm	Has happened before and recognises signs. Keeping going is not healthy. Need space.
Accumulative	Qu: So I now have a ... rule ... agreement with my wife... Int: Yep	
Support strategy	Qu: ...pact with myself... Int: [laughs] Qu: ...I dunno whether the right phrase. So I do sixty hours a week and I stop, and if that's Friday... Int: Yep	Affecting home life, structure of support to manage to keep going. Agreement.
Separating home from work. Clear definitions.	Qu: ...at 4 o'clock, then I don't do anything over the weekend. Int: That's fantastic Qu: Um ... but I've learnt that the hard way ... and um ..... it's ... there are other people who don't, cant do that... Int: Mhmm	Learning through mistakes: can see other people need support too, or recognise symptoms in others.
Experience	Qu: ...find that harder. Int: Yeah Qu: Um ... and you've got to be able to rationalise that and say, 'd'you know what, I've done sixty hours, that's enough, even	Experience v newly qualified. Or hardened to it and normalised?

Struggled in the past	when there's a pile, you know, a to do list in your book, or a pile under your keyboard ... hiding it under your keyboard doesn't actually make that any better. Int: [laughs] You can still see it [laughs] Qu: You can still see it. But, you 'd just like to be able to just walk away from it and said...	Always more to do but need to stop. Knows avoiding but necessary for him to continue to do the job effectively.
Done enough	Int: Yeah	
Self-help strategies	Qu: ...you know, enough is enough. Int: Do you think...	Trying to shut off but not really able to?
Role expectations	Qu: So...	
Enough	Int: ...your experience in-in that is, kind of, helping? Because I think ... you sound ...like this has been your role for a really long time and you, kind of, it feels like maybe you reached that point where it's actually was enough is enough. Do you feel like maybe people have to get to that point before they can start, kind of, just being really strict? Qu: Yeah I think you probably do. Int: Yeah	
Individual differences for staff	Qu: I think d... I think it depends on your personality, but I think y...uh a lot of people who end up in education do so because they've got that sort of underlying, caring, wanna help.... Int: Absolutely, yep	Key personalities in teaching can make it harder to emotionally shut off
Caring profession	Qu: ...want to support people and so ... and ... you come through a system where... you 'ave to work hard. D'you know what I mean?	
Want to help	Int: Yeah, absolutely Qu: It's just like, you know, if ... if you're not meeting the standard then you work harder...	Expectations require more and more work; work harder to make it better or you're not doing your job?
Expectation is to do more	Int: Mhmm Qu: ...and that's, that's ... you know that is very much the culture within education...	
Standard driven	Int: Absolutely, yeah Qu: ...so, you just, yeah, you just keep goin' ... and you keep goin' ... and you keep going and then you put that in the context of a... the financial climate. Int: Mhmm	Repetitive to continue emphasis. Going but not thinking. Context adds additional pressure.
Expectation of education	Qu: Then it makes it diff... it makes it even harder. So, you know, the supervision... I've got a couple of pastoral support team that [deep breath] a few years ago we tried to put some supervision in place but umm, it	Resourcing?
Pushing harder		Have tried previously, needs to be the right person and in the right context
Current context		

Resourcing	<p>didn't work with the person that we employed to do it.</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: Umm, last year I didn't 'ave any money to do it. This year, we've used some of our Headstart funding...</p> <p>Int: Fantastic</p> <p>Qu: ...to try and get something up and running with [colleague name] um ... and I-I-I've got, I'm-I'm all over it, but, we've got a four hundred thousand pound deficit next year, I'm not gonna 'ave the Headstart money.</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: I'm not gonna be able to spend.</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: You know, whatever it's gonna be ... three hundred quid to buy in...</p> <p>Int: More services</p> <p>Qu: ...more service.</p> <p>Int: It's really frustrating isn't it? I think this is something that is, there's a partic... it feels like there's maybe a particularly um ... difficult boiling point at the moment, where the expectation on what schools in particular are doing, versus the res... the kind of recognition about what they're already doing with so mu...</p> <p>Qu: Mmm</p> <p>Int: ...consistently reduced resources.</p> <p>Qu: Mmm</p> <p>Int: Um ... and the pressure that that puts on people that are remaining, then only increases when eventually...</p> <p>Qu: Yeah</p> <p>Int: ...people are gonna keep-keep dropping...</p> <p>Qu: Absolutely, so...</p> <p>Int: ...because they cant manage that.</p> <p>Qu: So our school-wide culture is very much not exams, exams, exams, it's kids, kids, kids.</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: But even so, we've got ... I know of at least ten members of staff who were on anti-depressant medication.</p> <p>Int: Mmm</p> <p>Qu: So, that's 1 in 10...</p> <p>Int: Yep</p> <p>Qu: Y'know, 10% of our staff. That's the ones I know of...</p>	<p>Finance restricting capacity to deliver. Staff well being needing to be priority but not able to reach top of list with limited resourcing</p> <p>Knowledge of what's coming making things harder?</p> <p>Purchasing well being support. Needs to be managed within budget somehow?</p> <p>Culture is YP needs first.</p> <p>Know that this is still affecting staff levels: trying to relieve top down pressure by not emphasising exam results but the emotional connection still causing wellbeing concerns?</p>
Staff Wellbeing		
Resources		
Funding pot LA specific		
EP team support		
Resource deficit		
Limited funding		
Ethos: School culture		

Medicating	<p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: So I'm sure there's more.</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: And that's just to cope with ... just to cope with their job.</p> <p>Int: With the job, absolutely</p> <p>Qu: And those aren't, those aren't ... none of those are dealing with our high end...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...pastoral or SEN stuff. They're classroom teachers...</p>	<p>Cope rather than enjoy or feel worthwhile.</p>
Coping	<p>Int: Yeah, day to day.</p> <p>Qu: So they're the ones dealing with the day to day...</p>	<p>Continuous low levels?</p>
Levels of stress	<p>Int: Yep</p> <p>Qu: Umm they're ... and they're the ones charged with getting them through some exams as well.</p>	<p>'Dealing with' emotional language and connection: not working with</p>
Levels of responsibility	<p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: So in a way, they're kind of, pastoral roles where there's no measures...</p> <p>Int: Yep [laughs]</p> <p>Qu: ...on it, other than 'are the kids still alive' and...</p>	<p>Still recognise exams exist too.</p>
Expectations on schools	<p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...all the rest of it. Umm t'. Then in a way that's almost easier. So I think there's, yeah, there-there's something ... it's got to a point, having been doing this for 25 years, it's got to a point where ... they've squeezed and squeezed and squeezed and squeezed and now the-the people are breaking...</p>	<p>Low threshold for concern: normalised levels of emotional connection. They just need to stay alive. Shows significance of level of harm awareness.</p>
Measures= pressures	<p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...because they've just ... back to that ... what d'you do, you just work harder [deep breath] they squeeze and squeeze and squeeze, there's nothing else to give now...</p>	<p>'they've' other beings responsible for this. Top down expectations. Squeezed: emotionally physically drained.</p>
Others (outside people)	<p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...and it is harder and harder to do even, even the little stuff so ... y-what the sorts of things that go are ... umm ... the conversations round the photocopier, the just stopping and chatting to someone and coz you... nobody's got time...</p>	<p>Culture of pushing to limits. Your responsibility regardless so keep going.</p>
Top down expectations	<p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...to just chat to colleagues.</p> <p>Int: Definitely</p> <p>Qu: So even that informal offload of 'awe bloody 9C...</p>	<p>The connection with others is disappearing, maintaining team connection is vital</p> <p>Time as a resource.</p>
Connections with others	<p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...what a right ... bla-bla-bla...</p>	<p>Human connection to others sharing the same situation.</p>
Relationships		<p>Knowing you're not alone?</p>

Time as a resource	<p>Int: [laughs]  Qu: ...I just had a disastrous lesson'.  Int: Yep  Qu: Even that stuff happens less now...  Int: Mhmm  Qu: Um so you haven't got even that, just that little ... kind of pressure valve to...  Int: Yeah  Qu: ...release and release and release.  Int: And connecting with just another person about it...  Qu: Yeah  Int: ...for a moment [laughs] and then...  Qu: Yeah an-and I think the rea... the biggest challenge and my head's come on board with this ... but if-if we ... evolve a supervision model here...  Int: Mhmm  Qu: ...which is my aspiration ... but if we do that, that's really gonna challenge that culture about ... that's not work.  Int: Mhmm, yeah  Qu: Th... coz you're not doing something which is student facing, which is moving the organisation forward...  Int: Yep  Qu: ... which is [deep breath] helpful or supportive, or anything else...  Int: Mhmm  Qu: ...um, so, that's gonna be an interesting ... journey?  Int: Yep  Qu: Challenge? Um, I don't know where, where that's gonna end up, it would be interesting to see how that evolves...  Int: Yeah  Qu: ...um, in terms of that, um, taking a time out. You know, when you stop and you think and the reason we're bringing it in is, is a no brainer because, if you take that time out to help somebody stay healthy then they're gonna do their job far better...  Int: In the long run, absolutely  Qu: ...in the long run and, you know, it's ... that's why we're introducing it.  Int: Mhmm  Qu: But my challenge is still gonna be something that is ... find something that is financially affordable...  Int: Mhmm</p>	<p>Reduced options to do this.</p> <p>Needs to let of steam gradually otherwise larger problems occur.</p> <p>SLT need to be involved and supportive</p> <p>Established culture is that only face to face with kids is working. Staff resistant to human support due to the wider expectations of carrying on and working harder. Their responsibility is to teach.</p> <p>Hesitant that they can break that culture even within a supportive environment. Sense that some will see supervision as a waste of time. Time as a resource.</p> <p>Makes sense. Need to be on board to make it effective though.</p>
Need to connect		
Personal connection		
Senior Leadership priorities		
Culture change		
Performance pressure		
Keeping healthy		
Wellbeing priority		

Resourcing impacting decisions	<p>Qu: ...and sit culturally alright...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...and then there's th-that next bit of, what about all the other guys who just feel under that pressure.</p> <p>Int: Absolutely</p> <p>Qu: How can we do it without getting to the point of needing to be medicated for it?</p> <p>Int: Mmm ... and I think you kind of mentioned then how important it is, sort of top down, to have that message through, because actually, we...we recently had a session, a whole day session, with our psychology service, so not just EPs but um all the other kind of psychology people that come under our umbrella, um about wellbeing ... and actually, for me as a worker, the fact that the-the senior leadership team took that decision that we were all gonna have a day where we were just sitting together to reflect and talk about that as being important, really made me think, actually, I'm not necessarily taking care of myself as much as I should...</p> <p>Qu: Mmm</p> <p>Int: ...because it was... you were given permission to do it, because actually this wasn't your decision to be in this meeting [chuckles] somebody else had decided it for you...</p> <p>Qu: Yeah w...</p> <p>Int: ...and that needs to kind of feel OK doesn't it...</p> <p>Qu: ...when I was an adviser, um, the boss of the team wh-when I started, he um, he used t'say the harder... the hardest thing about school improvement is you're trying to redesign and rebuild a plane while you're still flying it.</p> <p>Int: Absolutely</p> <p>Qu: And I think that's still the best analogy that I've come up with in-in most jobs in most businesses, um, staff training is a very important part, in grown up jobs you go in 'n you might have three months training before you even start the job.</p> <p>Int: Yep</p> <p>Qu: Whereas here it's like ... crack on.</p> <p>Int: Yep, absolutely</p> <p>Qu: There y'go you're qualified, get in your classroom...</p>	<p>Wellbeing being restricted by financial priorities.</p> <p>Needs to work with them. Relationships need to work, just as with kids.</p> <p>All staff would benefit.</p> <p>Need to think preventatively</p> <p>Good analogy. 'Hardest' emotional language continued. Challenge throughout.</p> <p>Recognition that the teaching profession does not work the way other private business might.</p>
Whole staff issue		
Wellbeing for all		
Staff training		
Juggling responsibilities		
Training		



<p>Emotional connection</p> <p>Teaching v other roles</p> <p>Getting on</p> <p>Different expectations on professions</p> <p>Private values on public service</p>	<p>Int: Yep</p> <p>Qu: ...and, you know, we'll see you at half th... it's not quite like that but it's th...</p> <p>Int: No</p> <p>Qu: Um, yeah, it's a very different mentality, so even if we wanted to, we cant just say to the kids, 'don't come in tomorrow we need a...</p> <p>Int: Yeah st...</p> <p>Qu: ...staff mental health day.</p> <p>Int: Yeah, exactly, yeah</p> <p>Qu: It doesn't, it-it doesn't work like that, um...</p> <p>Int: You're having to think systemically whilst still kind of fire-fighting and just getting on with it day to day...</p> <p>Qu: Yeah, yeah</p> <p>Int: ...which is really hard isn't it.</p> <p>Qu: The national strategy, ahh it must be ten years ago, rolled out a coaching model for staff development and staff support, and it's brilliant...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: ...but everywhere I've seen it work, either as an adviser, or as a-an-a teacher, it falls down because it's so intensive on staff time...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm, yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...and hooking people up, getting them out the classroom, getting them to do whatever...</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: ...um, that's ... that's the challenge. It's, it's, I haven't seen it sustained anywhere.</p> <p>Int: Okay</p> <p>Qu: I know there's one former colleague who did the same advisory role as me up in [place name], who's got a job within a trust near [place name] uh...they...he's kind of become a bit of a... essentially his role is coaching staff for school improvement.</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: It's the only place I know of where it's really imbedded within their culture.</p> <p>Int: Wow</p> <p>Qu: Um...</p> <p>Int: That's not the greatest statistic with them [laughs].</p> <p>Qu: Yeah, it's um, it's a r...i... yeah, it-it falls down to money.</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p>	<p>Keep going</p> <p>Left to it.</p> <p>Can't operate as a private business and that is what needs to be recognised? Private values applied to public services?</p> <p>Can't marry up.</p> <p>Knows reactive. Emotional language again.</p> <p>Previously recognised as being important. Not sustainable as the system has changed resource wise.</p> <p>Time resource.</p> <p>Not face to face with students so can't be deemed sustainable in current climate. Paradox: job is face to face teaching alongside all additional responsibilities to support YP in need: SW status without the support that SW profession receives.</p> <p>Support needs to be culturally embedded and supported by all.</p>
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Resources Financing	Qu: That's ... and what do you have to do first? Do you have to teach the kids in front of you? Int: Yeah Qu: And they're gonna keep coming and they're gonna keep coming, um... Int: Yep Qu: So it's a really difficult balance. I'm looking over my shoulder because...	Resources. Financial climate  What's the priority? Mixed messages from wider expectations?
Prioritisation Expectations	Int: No I know, I'm very aware that we've... Qu: ...I was expecting a message to say that [colleague name] was gonna be coming up, but it's a little bit flexible because she's gone in to help [child name] um...	Continual  Minds elsewhere.
Balancing roles	Int: That's no problem we can wrap it up if you want. Qu: That is cool, we k-might as well keep talking until... Int: Okay Qu: ...they come here. Int: [laughs] Um the only kind of thing, I suppose we've sort of talked about it because you're already, sort... actively using the EP service and you're kind of already thinking about supervision. Kind of, in the prefect world where the finances weren't an issue, how would you want to support your... to support you and to support your staffing as well? Qu: I think that's this... that's where we're at, is, is negotiating that with, with [colleague name]. I've got friends in social services, I've got friends, um, working in early help teams, not only down here but up country. Int: Mhmm Qu: Umm ... so I am ... familiar with the fact that they all have supervision... Int: Yeah Qu: ...and I've chatted a bit about what supervision is. Um but they're in no culture of supervision within education so... Int: Mmm	
Awareness of supervision	Qu: It's a little bit ... the first that I'm gonna need to do with [colleague name] is flesh out what it... what it needs to do. Int: Yep	
Culture of support	Qu: What does supervision need to do? Int: Mhmm Qu: Organisationally what do we need it to do?	Culture needs to reflect what's happening and support the changes expected on profession.

<p>Wants v Achievable</p>	<p>Int: Yep  Qu: How does that look?  Int: Yeah  Qu: And then, what can it afford.  Int: Absolutely  Qu: Both in terms of time or buying in expertise to do that.  Int: Yeah  Qu: Umm ... and ... yeah so ... um ... that's gonna ... I'm-I'm interested to see as to how that's gonna pan out and how that's gonna be.  Int: Yeah  Qu: Umm ... uhhh ... kind of both personally and then also, kind of, organisationally.  Int: Mhmm  Qu: Um and how many people do I include in that? Is it just it c... it won't be just the DSLs because, although they hold some of the high end stuff, actually, some of that wider pastoral team who hold lots...</p>	<p>Need to be clear to make sure it embeds and is successful.</p> <p>Finance constraints</p>
<p>Personal and Organisation</p>	<p>Int: Yeah  Qu: ...of the lower level stuff...  Int: Mhmm  Qu: ...and they're not quite sure. Is that a referral or not.  Int: Mmm  Qu: Is that a ... those almost, in some ways, those are harder than the ones where somebody just comes and discloses sexual abuse in a way you...</p>	<p>Sees value in both?</p> <p>Will need to prioritise access within own team; who is most 'needy' almost like with yp: necessary because of resourcing restrictions.</p>
<p>Thresholds applied across all aspects</p>	<p>Int: Mmm  Qu: Is that a ... those almost, in some ways, those are harder than the ones where somebody just comes and discloses sexual abuse in a way you...</p>	<p>Uncertainty remains,</p>
<p>Emotionally Holding Uncertainty</p>	<p>Int: Definitely  Qu: ...you know, away you go but you know, so far this term we've had ... well ... we've got two very open and active cases of sexual abuse; one from a step-brother that's happened since seven; one from a neighbour. We've got uhhh... the mispers and the suicides that I talked about...</p>	<p>Harder in terms of factual disclosure and also distressing to listen to.</p>
<p>Uncertainty is harder on wellbeing</p>	<p>Int: Mhmm  Qu: ...the other day. We've had umm... three others that have made referrals around um anxiety that are new to us, plus we've got the ongoing ten safety plans for the kids who have been...</p>	<p>Lots of significant levels of need.</p>
<p>Significant levels of need</p>	<p>Int: Yeah  Qu: ...acting out and suicide through the year. So ...um, on a day to day basis we're still making decisions about, not about um, who could do with a bit of a chat we're d...</p>	

Decision making Prioritisation Thresholds	our decisions are driven by who's most at risk of significant harm. Int: Yeah Qu: And they are the ones who take up the time that we've got available. Int: Mhmm Qu: And so, what I'm interested in doing and we're starting to look at within the finances that we've got, how can we restructure so that we get more early intervention done?	Need to prioritise needs for kids  Time as a resource
Most risk		
Time as a resource	Int: Yeah Qu: So you... alright so we've got a pretty good climate and culture across the school in terms of inclusion and acceptance and all of that sort of stuff but then [deep breath] the problem with that is you identify people who could do with some help...	System needs to change to support with the current financial restrictions.  Culture across school.
Preventative work	Int: Yeah Qu: ...and th...th... my pastoral team th... are overloaded. Int: Mhmm Qu: So that's a different stressor.	Knowledge on who needs support as well as causing additional concern because of this.
Culture of school	Int: Yeah coz you-you know there's more that you could do but actually, physically it's not possible... Qu: Yeah Int: ...at the moment.	
Leading Knowledge of team	Qu: So you end up seeing people once a fortnight when you know they'd really benefit from once a week. Int: Yep Qu: Or once a week when you know that at the moment they're in crisis and they'd really benefit from once a day. Int: Yeah	
Relationships with Team	Qu: Um... and you know, th-this kind of, we have to be cruel to be kind d... and just say, 'get into your lessons'. Int: Mhmm	
Knowing them well	Qu: But we've tried the model where they all come out and 'ave a time out in a separate room and then that's not supportive either, they b...can become overly reliant on that. Int: Mhmm Qu: Umm so that... that as a model is ... it doesn't really work either, because you're not giving them ... it's okay to do the holding but unless you give them the strategies to be successful on their own...	Feels sometimes straight down the line can be hard but necessary.  Strategies need to be helpful in the long run
Different strategies		

Individual setting approaches	Int: Yep, absolutely Qu: ...there's nowhere they can go, you know. Int: Exactly Qu: So resource, resource, resource. Int: Yep, couldn't agree more...	Recognising emotionally holding them. Need to think beyond that and support for future planning. Job is to make successful, sustainable changes.
Holding Future planning Support	Qu: Coz even if you're thinking... Int: [laughs] Qu: ...even if you... even if you've got in your head what you want, if you can't afford it... Int: Yeah	Finance
Resource	Qu: ...you're just compromising all the time. Int: Exactly ... must be very frustrating knowing exactly how you would do it... Qu: Yeah Int: ...and what actually is possible [laughs] Qu: Yeah, absolutely ... and th... and the model we had eight, ten years ago that-that whe-where there was enough money in school for parent support advisors, there was enough... Int: Yeah	Need to adapt to what's available: know professionally what's best but can't offer it.
Wants v availability	Qu: ...money in school for ooh... broader pastoral support teams and so on and so forth. Int: Mhmm Qu: You know, that was, was effective, you know, I listened to the radio on the way in today and they're talking about knife crime and du-du-lu-lu. Int: Yep Qu: When I set u... my first, my first unit in... I don't even really wanna confess this, but the first unit I set up in a school was in 199...8... Int: Yep Qu: ...and that was all under the social inclusion... Int: Yep Qu: ...agenda and... Int: [inaudible response] [52:20] Qu: ...the reason that the social inclusion agenda kind of kicked off was, the kids who were out of school, who had been kicked out of school, were causing a whole load of blips in crime figures. Int: Mhmm Qu: So what do the government do?... chucked a load of resource to try and get kids better included in school.	Experience reflects that there was a time where this felt plausible. Wider support available for all not just individual teachers or students. Holistic systemic change occurring then?
Compromising		
Experience= awareness of changes		
Changes in agendas Socio-political context impacts		Agenda behind decision making from top down initiatives.

Resources	<p>Int: Yeah</p> <p>Qu: And that drove that next ten years, which was great...</p> <p>Int: Mhmm</p> <p>Qu: Um and then, t.. for the last five years it's just been cut-cut-cut-cut-cut.</p> <p>Int: Absolutely</p> <p>Qu: So all of those roles which became quite established have a-are just...</p> <p>Int: Gradually dying</p> <p>Qu: ...ebbing away.</p> <p>Int: Yeah</p>	Resourcing
Cuts and restrictions	<p>Qu: That doesn't matter whether that's through children centres or school based, or whatever.</p> <p>Int: Yep</p> <p>Qu: A-and now even if we wanna make a referral there's no one 'o refer to.</p>	Restricting financing etc.
Reducing wider support	<p>Int: Absolutely</p> <p>Qu: [deep breath] So it's a bloody nightmare it...</p> <p>Int: Human resources in particular [laughs]</p> <p>Qu: It is.</p>	Wider support that has felt useful is gradually reducing so more issues in long run?
Holding it all. No referral expectations	<p>Int: Thank you so much.</p> <p>Qu: No worries.</p>	Feels no-one out there to support. Solely their responsibility.

## Appendix 16. Print screen of leaflet developed to raise awareness for EPs

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Comments

### Considering the Impact of Exposure to Domestic Abuse on CYP for Educational Psychologists.

This leaflet aims to raise awareness of the significance of the impact exposure to Domestic Abuse can have on the children and young people we work with.

### Domestic Abuse is defined as:

*"Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional"* (Strickland & Allen, 2017: 4)

### Some things to be aware of:

- Approximately 1.3 million women are affected by Domestic Abuse in the UK and almost half of these reported children being present.
- 1 in 5 children are exposed to domestic abuse and this transfers statistically to equate to roughly 6 children in the average UK class (Radford, 2011).
- 30% of Domestic Abuse victims reported the problem to begin or



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## What can we ask?



**Children:**

*"Who do you like to talk to?"*

**Parents:**

"What might help?"

**Teachers:**

"What would be helpful?"

**SLT:**

"What can we offer?"

## What do we see?

### Early Years, Primary & Secondary

an ability to 'tune-out' environmental noises

being withdrawn, engagement with repetitive play, impaired understanding, 'tantrums'

Separation anxiety, adaptive strategies such as feigning illness

Hypervigilance, poor concentration and attention skills

## What can we do?

Build trusting relationships with the school communities we work with.

Offer practical and evidence-based interventions of support such as Draw and Talk or Emotion Coaching.

Highlight the possibility of support through supervision for staff

Offer consultation on wider systemic changes such as the introduction of Wellbeing Policies over Behavioural Policies